

MAP OF THE TOWN OF BELLINGHAM IN 1919
 SHOWING THE STREAMS, STREETS, STEAM RAILWAYS, ELECTRIC RAILWAYS (---),
 CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, MILLS AND CEMETERIES
 SCALE: ONE INCH TO MILE

HISTORY
OF THE
TOWN OF BELLINGHAM
MASSACHUSETTS
1719 - 1919

BY
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PREFACE

THE two hundredth anniversary of our town this year brings the occasion for writing its history, for both those who are interested now and those who may care for it in the future. My purpose has been to collect and preserve the essentials of the story, not to describe the life of this rather unusual border town as it deserves. In the struggles of Baptists and Quakers for religious liberty from its beginning, and in the anxious times of the Revolution and the settlement of the constitution, the town was a leader in its day. Genealogy and much else that is interesting has been left out, and documents have been quoted exactly but with omissions. The chief sources used have been the town records and the vital statistics, church records, the Massachusetts Archives and General Court Records, the Registries of Deeds and Wills at Boston and Dedham, and the Metcalf and other family papers. There are in print two sermons of Rev. Abial Fisher on our first century, and a chapter on Bellingham by R. G. Fairbanks in Hurd's "History of Norfolk County," 1884.

This book has been made possible by the vote of \$500 for its publication by the town, and by Mr. A. E. Bullard, who has met the expense of printing beyond that sum. The author's thanks are due also to the town's committee on publication, and to many others who have helped him in the pleasant task. That committee is Maurice J. Connolly, Percy C. Burr, and Orville C. Rhodes, now deceased.

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A map, eleven autographs, and twenty-six pictures.

History of Bellingham

CHAPTER I

GOVERNOR BELLINGHAM

THE town of Bellingham has a name that has not been much used, for either persons or places. In England Sir Edward Bellingham was a headstrong and quarrelsome Puritan soldier, who died in 1549. In Northumberland, not far from the Scottish Border, is a quaint little town of that name, with a remarkable church, built about seven hundred years ago, when the noble family of Bellinghams lived there. It produces many sheep, and coal, iron and lime from its mines.

In America, when the English navigator Vancouver first explored the coast of the State of Washington in 1792 and found what is now called Bellingham Bay, he named it for Sir Henry Bellingham, the British naval officer who had dismissed him on this voyage. The flourishing city of the same name on its shores is a county seat, with a normal college, four railroads, and manufactures that give it the fourth place in its State. Its chief products are shingles and salmon, and it has great quarries. Its population is thirty-three thousand. Besides these two places, there appear to be only two small post offices of our name besides our own, one in Ontario and one in Minnesota.

Our town was named for the third Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, the old Puritan lawyer, Richard Bellingham.

His name will never be forgotten, because it is preserved in a famous book, Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," but only a few of those who read it there ever know the life story that makes him memorable for his own sake. He was born in England of a good family in 1591, and educated for a lawyer. Few men gave up that profession to become a Puritan as he did, and he was naturally a leader among them all his long life. He was the Recorder of the important English town of Boston, helped to draw up the charter of the new Massachusetts Bay Colony, was one of the twenty-six original members of the company, and subscribed fifty pounds for it. He arrived in Boston in 1634 with his wife Elizabeth and his son Samuel.

He was given a sort of greeting in that quaint and childish book, "Johnson's Wonder Working Providence in New England," published in 1654: "At this time came over the much honored Mr. Richard Bellingham, whose estate and person did much for the civil government of this wandering people, hee being learned in the Lawes of England, and experimentally fitted for the worke, of whom I am bold to say as followeth:

"Richardus now, arise must thou, Christ seed hath thee to
plead,
His people's cause, with equall lawes, in wilderness them lead;
Though slow of speech, thy counsell reach, shall each occasion
well,
Sure thy stern look, it cannot brook, those wickedly rebell."

Probably these four lines are amply enough to show how bold the poet was.

Newcomers in Boston then were not citizens until they joined the church and were accepted as freemen by vote. His name is on the first list of twenty-six freemen, and he and his wife joined the church in 1634.

The very next year he received two high honors, when a military commission for public defence with extraordinary powers, including the penalty of death, was appointed, consisting of the magistrates and Mr. Bellingham; besides this he was Deputy Governor for the year.

He was repeatedly placed on a committee to draw up a code of fundamental laws based on the Bible, but the task was always put off because the magistrates avoided it in order not to transgress their charter; a natural growth of the common law was safer for them. He had a larger share in the law-making for the colony than any other man, unless Winthrop.

In 1636 a public subscription for a school in Boston was started, and Bellingham's name came third on the list with a gift of ten pounds. "Like Winthrop, Dudley and Bradstreet, he was a man of property above the rest."

In 1640 he was Deputy Governor again, and men began to think of him for the higher office, which was then held by Joseph Dudley of Roxbury. This was Dudley's first term, and he was the first Governor who was not a voter in Boston, chosen probably not on account of any dissatisfaction with his predecessor, Winthrop, but because "the freemen feared a governor for life." No good reason appears why Dudley was not continued in office for another year, but the remarkable election of 1641 put Bellingham in his place.

We have no account of the campaign, but Winthrop's History says: "There had been much laboring to have Bellingham chosen." Every freeman of the colony could vote for Governor either in person or by proxy, and Bellingham was chosen by six votes, out of fourteen hundred. When this result was announced, some men who had not voted when they entered the room, as the custom

was, asked to be allowed to do it then, but they were too late. Besides the mortification of seeing this close result, the new Governor was at once insulted by the General Court, for they immediately repealed the Governor's annual grant of one hundred pounds, and he was left with no salary for this year till October, 1643, when the Court voted him fifty pounds.

Not only was the pleasure of his triumph spoiled by these two public disappointments, but his grand house, on Tremont Street opposite to King's Chapel burying ground, had lost its mistress by death, and he was left alone with his son Samuel. The house is imagined in "The Scarlet Letter": "It was a large wooden house, decorated with strange figures and diagrams, suitable to the quaint taste of the age, which had been drawn in the stucco when newly laid on, and had now grown hard and durable, for the admiration of after times. With many variations, Governor Bellingham had planned his new habitation after the residences of gentlemen of fair estate in his native land. Here then was a wide and reasonably lofty hall, extending through the whole depth of the house. At one extremity this spacious room was lighted by the windows of two towers, which formed a small recess on either side of the portal. At the other end, though partly muffled by a curtain, it was more powerfully illuminated by one of those embowed hall-windows which we read of in old books, and which was provided with a keep and cushioned seat. Here on the cushion lay a folio tome, probably of the Chronicles of England, or other such substantial literature. The furniture of the hall consisted of some ponderous chairs, and a table in the same taste, being heirlooms from the Governor's paternal home. On the table stood a large pewter tankard.

On the wall hung a row of portraits, representing the forefathers of the Bellingham lineage, and at about the centre of the oaken panels that lined the hall hung a suit of mail, not like the pictures an ancestral relic, but of the most modern date. This armor was not meant for idle show, but had been worn by the Governor on many a solemn muster and training field, and had glittered moreover at the head of a regiment in the Pequod war. For though bred a lawyer, the exigencies of this new country had transformed Governor Bellingham into a soldier as well as a statesman and ruler."

The Governor's mansion was not long without a new mistress, and she was found in a remarkable way. In 1635 Penelope Pelham, sixteen years old, had come to Boston, and had lived since then with her brother Herbert in Cambridge, who was the treasurer of Harvard College in 1643. She became the Governor's wife only a month or two after his election. Winthrop says: "The young woman was ready to be contracted to a friend of his, who had lodged in his house and by his consent had proceeded so far with her, when on a sudden the Governor treated with her and obtained her for himself. He excused it by the strength of his affection, and that she was not absolutely promised to the other gentleman. Two errors more he committed on it. First that he would not have his marriage contract published where he dwelt, contrary to an order of court, and second that he married himself, contrary to the constant practise of the country."

This remarkable marriage is described in a novel whose heroine is the Governor's bride, Carpenter's "Woman of Shawmut." Her brother Herbert reminds the Governor that the banns have already been published between her and another man, and asks, "Will

the godly ministers or the magistrates unite thee and her?" Bellingham replies: "Is not the Governor of Massachusetts Bay a magistrate who outranks them all? Have I not in me all authority which in another lieth?" "It is even so," says Herbert, bowing low.

Then, seizing the hand of Penelope, he leads her to the centre of the room, and standing there with his arm about her, he demands, "Summon thy household, good Master Pelham, and they shall see Governor Bellingham's power. Now, this very hour, shall Penelope Pelham be his bride." A vivid flush rises to the girl's cheeks, but she says nothing, and the household is assembled. "Penelope Pelham," says the Governor, "wilt thou, in the presence of these, take Richard Bellingham to be thy lawful husband?"

"Yea, I will," softly answers Penelope.

"And I, Richard Bellingham, will take thee, Penelope, to wife. And now I, the Governor of His Majesty's Colony of Massachusetts Bay, do pronounce and declare that Richard Bellingham and Penelope Pelham are man and wife together. The King shall be my witness."

The effect of this conduct of the chief magistrate can only be imagined, for there is no historical account of it. The astonishment and indignation of the Puritan colony must have been great. At the next session of the magistrates, while he was presiding, "The case of Richard Bellingham for breach of order of the court," was presented, but Bellingham kept his seat. Few magistrates were present, and the secretary said that the case must be postponed if he would not leave his seat to stand at the bar. The Governor replied that he should not leave his seat unless commanded, perhaps adding, "Who will command me?" There is no record of further action in the case.

Naturally the Governor's term of office was not very smooth, but no very great troubles are found in the records. With all his domineering and quarrelsome disposition he had a legally trained mind and a Puritan conscience. The magistrates were offended at his conduct in taking the part of a poor miller against the rich ex-Governor Dudley, and at his improper interference as they considered it, in a fine which was duly imposed in court on a humble citizen. Winthrop says, "The General Court was full of uncomfortable agitations and contentions by reason of Bellingham's unfriendliness to some other magistrates. He set himself in an opposite frame to them in all proceedings, which did much retard all business, and was an occasion of grief to many godly minds and matter of reproach to the whole Court in the mouth of others, and brought himself low in the eyes of those with whom formerly he had been in honor." He showed "an evil spirit of emulation and jealousy, through his melancholic disposition, at seeing others of the magistrates bear more sway with the people than himself. Dudley, being a very wise and just man, and one that would not be trodden under foot of any man, took occasion (alleging his age, etc.) to tell the Court that he was resolved to leave his place. The Court was much affected and entreated him to leave off these thoughts. The Governor (Bellingham) also made a speech, as if he desired to leave his place of magistracy also; but he was fain to make his own answer, for no man desired him to keep or to consider better of it." Before his year of office was over, even the Deputies, with whom he had been more friendly than the magistrates, sent a committee to give him a solemn admonition, a thing which was never done to any Governor before. Though the freemen of Boston chose him selectman at

this time, as the custom was to include the Governor in that body, he was not to hold his higher office again for thirteen years.

The General Court had voted contrary to the charter in 1636 as follows: "The General Court shall elect from time to time a number of magistrates for term of their lives as a standing council, not to be removed but upon conviction of crime or other weighty cause, and to have such power as the Court shall endue them withal." Bellingham aspired to this office, but Winthrop, Dudley and Endicott were the only members ever chosen, and it was soon voted that all officers of the Colony should receive their powers annually, so that the plan came to nothing.

It had happened in 1636 that the rich and rather unpopular Captain Keayne, the founder of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, had a stray pig brought to him, which he advertised and kept nearly a year. Before he killed it, but after he had killed another pig of his own, a poor woman named Sherman came to identify the stray, declared that the one he had killed was hers, and claimed damages. The elders of the church and a jury both decided against her, and the jury gave Captain Keayne three pounds damages. Then the rich man sued the poor woman for slander, and got a verdict of forty pounds. She appealed to the General Court, which sat as one body though it consisted of both magistrates and deputies. After seven days of discussion, in 1642, two magistrates and fifteen deputies voted to reverse the award for slander and seven magistrates and eight deputies to uphold it; seven deputies did not vote. Thus the magistrates supported the rich man, and the deputies the poor woman, and the case was not considered settled. "Bellingham would have the mag-

istrates lay down their negative voice," that is, give up their veto power on the deputies. "Much contention there was." One of the magistrates wrote a small treatise to maintain the need of a second independent legislative body, and an attack on this pamphlet was written, it is supposed by Bellingham. Governor Winthrop made a speech of apology during this controversy, regretting his undue freedom in judging the acts of his brethren. The elders approved the sentence of the court, but the poor woman appealed again to the General Court for a new hearing, which was granted, and Captain Keayne was advised to return a part of the damages awarded him. The great constitutional question thus raised was thoroughly discussed, and not settled in haste, as Bellingham and the deputies wished. In 1644 it was voted apparently without opposition that hereafter each body should sit separately, and that only votes agreed to by both houses should become laws.

In 1653, when the original leaders of the colony had mostly died, Bellingham was chosen Deputy Governor, and the next year Governor. But one term of him was found enough, for he was immediately put back into the Deputy Governor's place, and kept there while Endicott was annually chosen Governor, for eleven years, till his death. After that event, Bellingham, the last survivor of the chief founders of the colony, was its Governor for the rest of his life.

In 1656, two Quaker women came to Boston to spread their faith. As the Governor was absent, Bellingham, the Deputy Governor, sent men to their ship to search their goods, and about one hundred of their books were burnt by the hangman; they were stripped in the search, and were kept imprisoned on their ship five weeks, till the captain took them away. When Endicott returned,

he was not pleased at this mild treatment, and declared that he would have had them well whipped. It was noticed that Bellingham grew milder towards the Quakers in his old age, but so did the whole colony, and besides the King's commissioners forbade such persecutions.

The fate of the Governor's own sister might be thought enough to quench such fanaticism. Her husband, Mr. Hibbens, had been a magistrate, an agent of the colony in England and an eminent merchant, but lost his property and died leaving his widow in poverty. She became very querulous and troublesome to her neighbors, and was hung as a witch on Boston Common in 1656, the second victim of the witchcraft delusion in the colony.

It seems impossible to believe that the Massachusetts men could be so foolish, unless we know the prevailing belief of the mother country at the same time. From 1660 to 1718 twenty-five books on this subject were published in England. Joseph Addison, the great writer, defended the doctrine in 1711. John Wesley said that if he gave up witchcraft he must give up the Bible. Sixty persons were executed as witches in one year in one county in England, and five as late as 1722. The English law against witches was repealed in 1736.

In Massachusetts four persons were executed in Boston at different times, and finally at Salem sixteen by a special court appointed by a rash and ignorant provincial governor, Sir William Phips, representing not the people of Massachusetts but the King. Four years later the State's repentance was expressed by a public Fast Day, and in 1703 the Representatives solemnly voted: "Ordered that no Spectre Evidence may hereafter be accounted valid . . . within this Province, and that

the Infamy and Reproach cast on the names and Posterity of the accused and condemned Persons may in some measure be Rolled away." Even eighteen years after the dreadful mistake their consciences were not at rest, for in 1710 a bill was passed to remove the legal disability of persons condemned for this crime, and to pay them and their representatives five hundred and seventy-eight pounds for damages.

When the King of England wrote in 1666 that "it was very evident that those who govern the colony of Massachusetts did believe that his Majesty had no jurisdiction over them, and that no one could appeal to him from their decisions," he commanded Richard Bellingham and Major Hathorne with two or three others to be chosen by the General Court "to attend upon his Majesty forthwith." After some discussion and delay, the Court pretended not to understand the order, and voted that they should not go, but the last business of the session was to send the King a present of masts for the Royal Navy worth nearly two thousand pounds, and that ended the matter.

The records of the Suffolk Deeds contain a quaint story of the old Governor. In 1673 James Penniman testified to a conversation with him about four years before on the highway to Roxbury, when the Governor, coming riding by, asked him who pulled down the Governor's fence. He replied that the road was so bad that travellers often took down the fence to mend it. The Governor seemed troubled and said, "I have given Angola the Negro a piece of my land fronting on the highway of fifty feet square."

"If your Worship now you are a giving will be pleased to give mee a piece, I would thank you and accept of itt."

“Thou never didst that for mee which hee hath done, he was the only InStrument that under God Saved my life, comeing to mee with his boate when I was sunke in the River betweene Boston and winisimet Severall years since, and laid hold of mee and got me into the boate he came in and saved my life.”

“Also Meneno Negro saith that some foure yeare since being at Carrying of the Late Govern^{rs} Richards Bellingham Esq^r Wood into his yard when wee that is my Selfe & Angola had done, the Governor giving us a Cup of Sack Said Stroaking Angola on the head I have given you a piece of Land of fivety foot square.”

Only the Governor's son Samuel in London outlived him. In 1642 he graduated at Harvard College, and he afterwards went to Europe to study medicine. He received his degree at Leyden and married in London about 1695 a widow from Boston in Massachusetts. Another son John also graduated at Harvard College, in 1660, but he died about 1670, and the Governor himself died December 7, 1672. His estate of three thousand two hundred and forty-four pounds was left mainly for charity, but fate would have it that the old lawyer's will was set aside by the Court as not properly drawn. Mrs. Bellingham lived a widow for thirty years, till 1702.

In the northwest corner of the Granary Burying Ground, very near the spot where he built his mansion so long ago, is the Governor's tomb. There are two great slabs of sandstone separated by six graceful columns. The visitor is surprised to read on the upper one the name of Governor James Sullivan, for the tomb was assigned to him by the Selectmen, as the Bellingham family was extinct. The lower slab has the inscription for the older Governor, ending thus:

Virtue's fast friend within this tomb doth lie,
A foe to bribes, but rich in charity.

This grave is remarkable for another reason. The soil here is damp and springy. More than a century after it was first sealed up, when the new owner took possession, the coffin and remains of the old Governor were found floating about in the ancient vault. Not even in the grave could his stormy life find a peaceful end.

Richard Bellingham Esq

1591 — 1672

CHAPTER II

KING PHILIP'S WAR

THE land that is now Bellingham was very late in being settled by white men; most of it remained only "the common or undivided land of Dedham" till 1719, though Mendon on the west became an independent town in 1667, Wrentham on the east in 1673, Sherborn on the north in 1674, Medway in 1713, and Attleborough on the south in 1694. The first reason for this delay was fear of the Indians, whose ravages in King Philip's War on all sides of this territory kept away newcomers and drove away those who were already settled there.

They had been feared for some years before, as appears from the following promise of those nearest to our town: "To the Honored Governr Depty Governor Magistrates and Deputies now sitting in the General Court at Boston Apr 29 1668. The humble submission and subjection of the Native Indian Sagamore & people of Nepmuck. Inhabiting within the bounds of the Patent of Mass and neare adjoining unto the English Towns settled of Mendham (Mendon) and Marlborough. We being convinced of our great sins & how good it is to turn unto the Lord and bee his servants by praying and calling upon his name: We doe solemnly before God and this Courte give iurselves up soe to doe. Also wee, finding by experience how good it is to live under laws & good government & finding how much we need the protection of the English, doe fully out of our own motion & voluntary choice subject ourselves to the government

of the Mass. To the Honored General Court; to the Honord Governor Deputy Governor & Assistants to be ruled and protected by them. And we doe humbly entreat that we may be favorably accepted." After nine names and signs is written: "These have subscribed in the name and with the consent of all the rest."

King Philip claimed to own the land in Dedham, and in 1669 he received twenty-two pounds eight shillings for that part which lay beyond Wrentham, later the principal part of our town. Probably men went there for meadow hay in summer, as they did to Wrentham. If any early settlements were made, they must have been abandoned when the people of Wrentham deserted their homes and took their families to Dedham; the Dedham selectmen had been warned by the General Court in 1673 to prepare for an Indian war.

The danger appeared in a murder there four years before the war began, though there is nothing to show that Philip himself knew of it. Young Zachary Smith, a traveler, spent the night at a house there in April, 1671, and was found dead in "Dedham Woods" the next day. Three Indian's had passed the same way after him that morning, known to the English there, calling themselves King Philip's men. They threw stones and called out insults as they passed. In a few days they were tried in court and one of them was convicted and executed on the gallows on Boston Common. This Indian was the son of Matoonas, sachem of the Nipmucks living at Pakachoag near Worcester. The best historian of the time remarked that this son of Matoonas, "being vexed in his Mind that the Design against the English intended to begin in 1671 did not take Place, out of mear Malice and Spight against them, slew an Englishman traveling along the Road."

What is generally called the first attack of the Indians in this war came at Swansea, June 24, 1675, when eight or nine white people were killed. Then on July 14, only a few miles from our territory, four or five persons in the field were killed by Nipmucks at Mendon, and "their leader was Matoonas, a grave and sober constable of Sachem John." The next year he and other Nipmuck chiefs begged for peace in a letter to the Governor. A proclamation of pardon was issued for all Indians who surrendered, and Sagamore John came to Boston for that purpose. His surrender was accepted and he came again with one hundred and sixty followers asking mercy, and "he brought down bound with Cords Old Matoonas and his son Nehemiah Prisoners. This Matoonas his eldest Son had been tryed at Boston and executed about 5 or 6 years ago, and his Head fastened to a Pole, at one End of the Gallows."

Matoonas had been accused before of saying that he would take vengeance on the English for his son's execution, but had denied it and been discharged. "But after King Philip began his Murthers in Plymouth Colony, this Salvage first appeared an Enemy to us, and slew the two first men that were killed within the limits of our Colony, to wit at Mendham. He was by the Council the same day adjudged to be shot to Death, which was executed in Boston Common by three Indians; and his Head cut off and placed upon a Pole on the Gallows opposite to his Son's that was there formerly hanged."

Next to Mendon, Medfield on the other side of our territory was the settlement most exposed to attack, and here the Indians had a great success. The pastor Mr. Wilson wrote an urgent letter on the danger to Boston February 14, 1676, and one hundred soldiers came to join the seventy-five men there who had arms. But on

February 21 early in the morning a man found an Indian in his barn, and ran to the garrison house with his family, leaving his buildings in flames. Probably this early surprise of the red man prevented even greater destruction by them, but thirty-two houses and other buildings were burned and seventeen persons were killed, including a man nearly one hundred years old who was burned. It is supposed that the soldiers had been dismissed at daylight. The town cannon was fired as a signal to Dedham, and at the second shot the savages rushed across the bridge towards Medway and then set it afire. In view of the town they then roasted an ox. This paper they left at the end of the bridge: "Know by this paper that the Indians that thou hast provoked to wrath and anger will war these 21 years if you will. There are many Indians left. We come three hundred at this time. You must consider that the Indians loose nothing but their lives, you must loose your fair houses and cattle."

A partly educated Indian called James the Printer, who had been apprenticed at that trade, had run away and joined Philip's men, and this proclamation was supposed to be his work. This attack on Medfield is said to have been led by "One-eyed John." At Groton afterwards he boasted that he had burned Lancaster and Medfield, and would burn Chelmsford, Concord, Watertown, Cambridge, Roxbury and Boston. "What me will, me do." He was hung in Boston the next September.

Soon after this attack a Wrentham man named Rocket, searching for a stray horse, discovered a trail of Indians moving westward. He followed them till sunset, and watched the company of forty-two men encamp for the night. They were on their way home after the burning of Medfield. He returned quickly to Wrentham, the women, invalids and children were gath-

ered into the fortified houses, and a little company of thirteen men marched out in the darkness. Their leader was Capt. Robert Ware, whose wife's nephew was John Metcalf, the first of his name to settle at Caryville in 1738. At daybreak when the Indians arose from sleep near a precipitous rock nearly all at the same time, they received the simultaneous fire of twelve guns, and many of them were injured also by jumping from the rock; twenty or twenty-four were killed, and the Wrentham men all returned home safe. Mr. Rocket received a pension from the State for the rest of his life.

The Indians came near our town again later, but accomplished nothing. There were about twelve families living at Bogastow in Millis, who had no white neighbors west and northwest of them nearer than the Connecticut River, only Mendon on the southwest, and to the east the Charles River and its swamps. Here Jonathan Fairbanks and his neighbors had built a house sixty or seventy feet long of flat stones "laid in dry mortar," of two stories with a double row of portholes lined with white oak plank, "superior to any fortress on the frontier." The upper story was for women and children, and there was a separate room for the sick. This house became a refuge for two generations, and not a few children were born here. When Medfield was burned there were probably fifty-nine persons in this house. They could see the smoke and hear the cannon. A Bogastow man was killed then, and his brother was scalped, but he recovered. The victim's wife bore a daughter named Silence when the sad news came, and died in a few hours. This orphan later married John Holbrook, who was an infant in the stone house at the time.

The Indians came the next day as was expected, and burned the houses on their way, but they soon went off.

Three months later they came again, and rolled a cart with blazing flax down a slope towards the fort, in order to kindle the thatched roof. It struck against a rock and stopped, and the Indian who ran down to push it forward was quickly shot. Then they retreated. Two months later they came again, but the settlers promptly scattered them.

There was no more fighting in this vicinity, though there were alarms for several years. On one of these occasions when the neighbors had assembled in the stone house, a woman was left alone with her baby a mile and a half away at twilight, and she was afraid to make the journey. She arranged her house to look as if deserted, went to the cellar, shut the trap door, and sat on the steps with the baby in her arms all night. This boy afterwards married a woman who could remember at the age of ninety-six having fled in childhood for safety to the same old stone house.

King Philip succeeded in uniting almost every tribe of the red men from Maine to Connecticut, and they began the war along a line of almost two hundred miles within three weeks. It lasted more than a year. Its greatest single battle occurred in December, 1675, when a thousand men marched from Dedham to a swamp stockade of the Indians in Rhode Island and triumphed after three hours' work. A thousand Indians and sixty white men were killed that day.

Another engagement was fought by Dedham and Medfield men the next July, when thirty-six white men and nine friendly Indians overtook and killed or captured fifty of the enemy. At this time Sachem Ponham was killed. "This Ponham after he was wounded so as that he could not stand upon his legs, and was thought to have been dead, made a shift (as the Souldiers were

pursuing others) to crawl a little out of the way, but was found again, and when an English man drew near to him, though he could not stand, he did (like a dying Beast) in rage & revenge get hold on that Souldier's head, and had liked to have killed him, had not another come in to his help, and rescued him out of the intraged dying hands of the bloody Barbarian, who had been a great promoter of the Narraganset War."

Finally in August, 1676, Captain Church, the best leader against the savages, found Philip on the edge of a swamp at midnight, and stationed a white man and an Indian in pairs all about the place. Philip came rushing out at dawn half dressed and was shot. He fell on his face in the muddy water with his gun under him, "and a doleful great naked dirty beast he looked like," says Church. The dead chief was beheaded and quartered according to the English law against treason, after this address by the Indian who did it: "You have been one very great man. You have made many a man afraid of you. But so big as you be, I will now chop you to pieces." His remarkable hand, "much scarred by the splitting of a Pistol in it formerly," was given to his executioner to exhibit, "and accordingly he got many a Penny by it." His head was exposed on a pole at Plymouth, on a day for public Thanksgiving, and remained there nearly twenty-five years. His wife and child, like some of the other captives, were sold for slaves in the Bermudas.

This was the end of the man who had struck such a terrific blow at the young settlements. Of five thousand men of military age in Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies one in ten was killed or captured, besides many women and children. Of eighty or ninety towns in eastern New England forty were badly burned, and a dozen

totally destroyed. More than half the towns in what is now Massachusetts suffered devastation. No help from England was asked or given, but the Connecticut colony sent a gift of a thousand bushels of corn. Over one hundred thousand pounds was spent on military forces, which was said to be more than the entire personal property of the inhabitants.

CHAPTER III

SECRETARY RAWSON AND HIS FARM

EDWARD RAWSON, the first white owner of Caryville and North Bellingham the Puritan Secretary of the Colony of Massachusetts, whose portrait hangs in the Registry of Deeds in Boston, was born in England in 1615. He married Rachel Perne, granddaughter of a sister of Edmund Grindal, a famous Archbishop of Canterbury, who was too friendly to the Puritans to please Queen Elizabeth, so that she suspended him from the duties of his high office for several years. Edward Rawson's mother was the sister of John Wilson, the first minister of Boston.

The young couple came from England to Newbury, Mass., in 1637, and he was the second town clerk there for nine years. He became a selectman and a judge, and a member of the General Court at the age of twenty-three. After serving as clerk of the General Court, he became Secretary of the Colony in 1650, and held that high office till his death. Johnson's "Wonder Working Providence" says: "Mr. Edward Rawson, a young man yet employed in Commonwealth affairs a long time, being of ripe capacity, a good penman and eloquent inditer, hath been chosen Secretary of the Colony." His position now required him to live in Boston, and his house stood on Bromfield Street, which was called Rawson's Lane till 1800. He sold house lots there bordering on the Common. His salary gradually rose from twenty



Edward Rawson Secretary

1615—1693

pounds to eighty pounds, and his family increased to twelve children. He was one of the twenty-eight persons who left the First Church in 1660 to form the Old South Church. He served as a steward for the English Society for Propagating the Gospel especially among the Indians. One thing to be regretted in his long and honored life was his zeal in persecuting Quakers, for his name often appears as their accuser, but he may easily have thought this a part of his duty as Secretary, whatever his own inclination was. He published two little books, "Revolution in New England Justified," and "The General Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts."

Edward Rawson's eighth child was Rebecca, who lived only ten days, but the ninth was also named Rebecca, and her sad, true story is the main interest in the poet Whittier's romance, "Margaret Smith's Journal." She was born in 1656, and carefully educated. She was called "one of the most beautiful, polite and accomplished young ladies of Boston, tall and graceful, with a pleasant wit." An authentic picture presents her to us in a very elaborate dress. A very pleasing young man appeared in town, who gave his name as Sir Thomas Hale, Jr., the nephew of the famous Chief Justice of England. He soon became her suitor, and they "were married in the presence of near forty witnesses" in 1679 and sailed away with many fine clothes to England. After landing there they went to the home of one of her relatives, and early the next morning he took the keys of their trunks, which were not yet brought from the vessel, and said that he would return for dinner. When the trunks came, they were empty, and she never saw him again. On inquiring at the inn it was found that his true name was Thomas Rumsey, and that he had gone back to his wife at Canterbury. In Boston it appeared

later that he had borrowed two hundred and fifty pounds of John Hill, the Colony Treasurer. A witness in court there testified that the same man had engaged to work for him one year as a bookkeeper in 1679. He said his father had died leaving him four hundred pounds a year. Later he reported that he was a nobleman and that his mother, Lady Hale, sent him bills of exchange, and that his father's estate was so large that "he durst not report it, for he would not be believed." Such stories as these he made use of to "put a cheat on Mr. Edward Rawson, to accomplish his abominable villainy and deceive him of his daughter."

The deserted bride lived in England for thirteen years, supporting herself and her daughter by painting on glass and similar arts, determined not to be dependent on her relatives there. "Finally, after countless requests, she consented to return to Boston for a visit." One of her relatives in England had children, and she left her daughter with that family. She sailed with an uncle of hers in a ship that he owned, and they arrived at Port Royal, Jamaica. While they were there, in 1692, a great earthquake swallowed the ship and part of the town. Her uncle happened to be ashore at the time, and he alone of all the ship's company was left to tell the tale.

The eleventh child of Secretary Rawson was Grindal, born in 1659, and graduated at Harvard College in 1678. On that occasion the President said, in Latin, speaking to the three leading men in the class: "The third, somewhat high-sounding, is Grindal Rawson; sprung likewise from a most illustrious stock; for his honored father holds a high place in the State, the very pious and orthodox John Wilson, a truly apostolic man, was his grandmother's brother, and the Right Reverend Edward Grindal,

Archbishop of Canterbury, a most saintly man and in the Archbishopric little less than a Puritan, his great great grandmother's brother. And may God grant that in learning, holiness and excellence of character he may resemble both Wilson and Grindal." He studied theology with his brother-in-law, the minister at Weymouth, and preached his first sermon at Medfield with great success. After only two months' preaching in other places, he went to Mendon in 1680, where he was permanently settled in 1684. His salary was fifty-five pounds and one cord of wood for every forty-acre lot in town, and he was to keep the house and lot which he then occupied. He married his second cousin Susannah Wilson of Medfield, and they had twelve children. His wife wrote that he was invited to other places larger than this "of about 20 families recovering from a tedious war. But these few sheep in the wilderness lay much upon his heart." Five years before he came, the Indians had burned every building in town, and all the inhabitants had fled. He served there faithfully for over thirty-five years, till his death at sunset on a Lord's Day in 1715, and so for a generation more of our first settlers knew him as their pastor than any other man.

He divided his large town into five districts and preached in one of them every Friday, and catechised the children there. At one time the Quakers and Independents of Rhode Island threatened him seriously; it would be a great triumph for them to drive out the young minister, the son of the old Puritan secretary. They held opposition meetings at their end of the town for a year or two, and had two or three public debates with him, but finally "they grew weary" and left him and the town in peace.

He learned the language of the Indians in nine

months "though 2 years were usually required," and "preached to their good understanding." He made it an article of his church covenant not to sell them rum, and the only man tried by him for breaking that covenant had committed that offence. There is an interesting printed report of an official visit to the Indians of Southern Massachusetts which took nearly all of June, 1698, by "Grindal Rawson and Samuel Danforth, Preachers to the Indians in their own tongue." The next year he printed a book of one hundred and sixty small pages in the English and Indian languages alternately, whose introduction says:

"It was an effect of this holy zeal that caused yourselves Honorable and Reverend to command me the Service of Translating The Confession of Faith made by the Churches in Boston in 1680 into the Indian Language, a work never yet attempted by any.

"From my chamber in Brantrey Nov 4 1699."

"There was never a Council in all the Neighboring Towns but he was at it. Also his voyage as Chaplain with the fleet to Canada and his Half Year in service at Nantucket (with Indians) will not be soon forgotten. His flock increased from 20 to over 100 families. He was a great peacemaker: in 35 years he had no considerable difference."

His wife wrote: "He was the greatest observer of the Lord's Day that I ever took notice of."

In 1709 he offered to board free a Latin schoolmaster for the town, so that fitting for college became a part of public education in this town perhaps earlier than anywhere else in Massachusetts.

In the same year he preached the Election Sermon before the Governor and the General Court at Boston, and it was printed. He mentioned sins of "Apostasy

from the faith and practice of the fathers. Places live without the Settled Means of Grace. Profanity is common. The Sabbath is Horribly Profaned and polluted. Ignorant prophane and prayerless families abound. The shameful and worse than Brutish sin of drunkenness is seen. How little care there is, especially in country towns, for the liberal education of children! Many such towns study Tricks and Shifts to evade the School Laws. Behold, behold O New England, the Cause thy God hath to be angry with thee!"

His gravestone, still to be seen in Mendon, was erected by a vote of the town twenty-eight years after his death, so that his life and public service might not be forgotten.

Erinial Rawson

1659 — 1715

The large family of Edward Rawson was not supported by his salary alone, but he was also granted land at various times by the General Court. One such tract lay unincorporated for a long time, and became almost as well known as the towns which surrounded it, under the name of Rawson's Farm.

It was confirmed to him by the General Court as follows in 1685:

"In answer to the humble motion & request of Edward Rawson who having purchased a small tract upland & meadow of Thomas Awassamoage son & heire of the late sagamore John Awassamoage by him reserved and is Invironed with the bounds of Deadham Meadefield Mendon & Sherborne as in sayd Awassamoages sale The Court grants and doe Grant & confirm the said

tract of land to the said Mr. Edward Rawson his heirs Assigns allowing the Sale of the sayd Thomas Awassa-moag not interfering with any former grant."

He sold three hundred acres of it, and gave his oldest son William eight hundred acres during his lifetime. Though he owned over six thousand acres of land in all, he sold and distributed to his children so much that his estate was found insolvent at last. The first item in his inventory was: "740 acres of wast land lying between Medfield and Mendon £37" (about twenty-five cents an acre). This remainder was sold by his administrator, William Rawson, in 1701, to three men, William Hayward and Thomas Sanford of Swansea and Thomas Burch of Bristol, Hayward paying one-half and the others one-fourth each. They also bought the eight hundred acres of him the year before. The whole Farm was described in this deed as surveyed and laid out by Captain Thomas Thurston of Medfield, "Bounded with Charles River Mendon & Sherborne and Touching in a point upon Medfield, which whole tract contains 1840 acres more or less." This territory included Caryville and North Bellingham and with a smaller area beside it on the west taken from Mendon, made about a third of the new town of Bellingham; the other two-thirds to the south was common land of the town of Dedham.

CHAPTER IV

THE TWO PIONEERS, BAPTIST AND QUAKER

THE men of Dedham went to their common land in both Wrentham and Bellingham in the summer to get hay from the meadows several years before King Philip's War, and Wrentham was incorporated as a town in 1673. After only two years that war came, and the settlers had to abandon their new homes and go back to Dedham as they had already done twice before, in fear of the Indians. In Bellingham no settlement had yet been made, as far as can now be known. There is only a vague tradition of a fort or house of refuge from Indians just north of the North Bellingham Cemetery. The overthrow of the Indians was so complete that the English soon recovered from their fears, though a few scattered red men remained, in some cases required to live with certain white as guardians. Though every house in Mendon was burned in December, 1675, and the people fled through Bellingham towards Boston, yet half of them returned, and six children were born there in the next two years.

The colonists of the other towns began to spread out again, and in 1691 the Dedham selectmen sent two men to examine the land that afterwards became Bellingham. They reported "Jan ye 4th 1692 ye Land neer Mendham (Blackstone was then a part of Mendon) and Wrentham is not worth ye laying out in a Devident" (for division). But on June 7, 1698, "the proprietors

of the common or undivided lands of Dedham" met by appointment and were informed by another committee that they contained about twenty-one hundred acres, and they agreed to draw lots of about one hundred acres each. "Jacob Bartlat did move for liberty to take up his proportion in the place where he has Sat down & made Sum Improvement this was voted provided convenient highways be reserved. Nicolas Cook likewise moved . . . to take up about fourty acres of land in part of his proportion neer his own land this was voted." These two men may be called the pioneers of the town, and each has an interesting story.

They were both men of strong and independent character, and both belonged more to the Rhode Island Colony of that time than to Massachusetts, as was true of most of their neighbors for a long time. They were border men who belonged outside the strict Puritan Colony. In fact Bellingham was largely a Rhode Island town that happened to fall within Massachusetts territory. That decision may seem unimportant in these days, but it was not so then, and the fundamental difference of the two colonies is by far the most important fact in the early history of the town.

What Massachusetts was at that time, is quickly seen from the early acts of its General Court, as the legislature of the colony was called. A company of men had been chartered in England to trade in the new world, whose members were all Puritans, but they turned their trading company into a theocracy, or rule of God on earth, and the commonwealth became a church, "administered for and by God."

At the beginning, in 1630, the General Court ordered that ministers of the churches be supported at the public expense. After 1631 no man could be admitted as a

freeman or voter unless a member of one of these churches. After 1635 every person absent from a church service must be fined or imprisoned. After 1636 no new church could be formed without the approval of the magistrates and the existing churches. In 1638 the ministers advised the General Court that it could punish heresies or errors of church members that might be dangerous to the state. In 1640 a jury found Hugh Buet (later of Rhode Island) "to bee guilty of heresy & that his person and errors are dangerous for infection of others." He should "bee gone out of or jurisdiction by the 24 present upon paine of death & not to returne upon paine of being hanged." When Governor Winthrop in his last sickness was asked by the Deputy Governor to sign an order for punishment under these laws, he refused, and said he had "done too much of that work already." So the "Rule of the word of God" meant persecution. Rhode Island, the reactionary neighboring colony, became the refuge of the victims, the Baptists and Quakers.

The Massachusetts churches baptized infants by sprinkling, but Baptists considered this an unscriptural and useless ceremony, because the infants could not understand it. The sect of Anabaptists arose in Germany about 1521, and it was suppressed by the government for its disturbances of the peace. They insisted that no one should join a church without being rebaptized when he reached years of understanding. This is the requirement of Baptists generally, who also prefer the immersion of the whole body to sprinkling. Those who declared that a true church must be limited to members baptized in this way were called close communion Baptists.

The Massachusetts law of 1644 for Anabaptists was in part: "Forasmuch as experience hath plentifully and often proved that since the first arising of the Anabaptists,

about a hundred years since, they have been the incendiaries of commonwealths, and the infectors of persons in main matters of religion, and the troublers of churches in all places where they have been and that they who have held the baptising of infants unlawfull have usually held other errors or heresies together therewith, and whereas divers of this kind have, since our coming into New England, appeared amongst ourselves. It is ordered and agreed, that if any person or persons within this jurisdiction shall either openly condemne or oppose the baptising of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, . . . every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment." But a Baptist meeting was started in Boston, in 1665, and though its members were fined and imprisoned, yet after a few years it was recognized as a Christian church, and its supporters became free from religious taxes.

The other great sect that troubled the Massachusetts authorities was the Quakers. Its founder was George Fox, who began to preach without ordination in England in 1648. His followers wished to abolish oaths, all ceremonies that made distinctions among persons, church sacraments, and war; they used extremely simple worship, and hoped for the conscious presence and control of the Holy Spirit in each man's life. Fox traveled and preached in this country also, and some of his followers felt constrained to protest publicly against the ceremonies in church and state which they disapproved. The Massachusetts law for these disturbers of the state was made in 1656:

"Whereas there is a cursed sect of hæretics lately risen up in the world, which are commonly called Quakers, who take upon themselves to be immediately sent of

God, and infallibly assisted by the spirit to speake and write blasphemouth opinions, despising government and the order of God in church and commonwealth, speaking evil of dignities, reproaching and reviling magistrates and ministers, seeking to turne the people from the faith and gaine proselites to their pernicious waies, . . . this Courte, taking into serious consideration the premises and to prevent the like mischiefe as by their meanes is wrought in our native land, doth heerby order that . . . any Quaker coming into this jurisdiction shall be forthwith committed to the house of correction, and be severely whipt, and be kept constantly at work, and none suffered to converse or speak with them during the time of their imprisonment, which shall be no longer than than necessity requireth. Any person proved to have the haretical opinions of said Quakers, or their books or papers, shall be fined forty shillings; for the second offence four pounds; for still offending, to be imprisoned till banished."

The persecution of Quakers under this law had little success in keeping them away, and it led to such complaints to the King of England that he sent a Quaker messenger, himself banished from New England, with a letter requiring all Quakers then in jail to be sent to England for trial; the General Court became somewhat afraid, and wrote to the King as follows:

"Although wee hope, and doubt not, but that if his majesty were rightly informed, he would be farr from giving them such a favor, or weakening his authority here so long and orderly settled, yet, that wee may not in the least offend his majesty, this Court doth hereby order and declare that the execution of the lawes in force against Quakers, as such, so farr as they respect corporall punishment or death, be suspended untill this Court take further order."

The King's reply commanded them to forbear to proceed any further therein, but to send the said persons, whether condemned or only imprisoned, to England to be tried there; still he instructed his commissioners to New England as follows:

"Wee cannot be understood hereby to direct or wish that any indulgence should be granted to those persons commonly called Quakers, whose principles being inconsistent with any kind of government, wee have found it necessary, by the advice of our Parliament here, to make sharp lawes against them, and are well contented that you doe the like there."

When the Massachusetts laws were revised in 1672, the banishment of Quakers was not omitted, and "If any Christian in this jurisdiction shall go about to destroy the Christian religion by broaching and maintaining any damnable heresies, . . . or shall openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or shall deny the lawful authority of magistrates to punish outward breaches of the first table (that part of the Ten Commandments which states men's duties towards God) or shall endeavor to seduce others, . . . every such person . . . shall be banished".

Another law as late as 1675 was: "Whereas it may be found among us, that men's thresholds are sett up by God's threshold, especially in the open meetings of Quakers, whose damnable Hoerisies, abominable idolatries, are hereby promoted, embraced and practised to the scandall of religion, hazard of souls, and provocation of divine jealousy against this people; for prevention and reformation whereof, it is ordered by this Courte that every person found at a Quaker's meeting shall be apprehended and committed to the house of correction."

So the Quakers had to suffer in both countries; in England twelve thousand were in jail at one time, and a tenth of them are thought to have died there. The Massachusetts men clung to their pious ideal of a theocracy as long as they could, and saw no lesson for them in Roger Williams' beautiful comparison of the officers of the ship of state with those of a ship upon the sea. He thought that men of all religions or of none could safely be allowed to be citizens as well as passengers, being controlled by civil laws alone. More than once the other colonies urged Rhode Island to suppress the Quakers. Its reply in 1657 was: "Wee have no law to punish any for declaring their minds on the ways of God, And we finde that where they are suffered to declare themselves most freely, there they least of all desire to come . . . And yet we conceive that their doctrines tend to overturning government among men if generally received."

The founder of the Rhode Island Colony, the refuge of these two sects, and its guide for almost fifty years, was this famous Roger Williams. He was a protesting clergyman of England, who refused to be the assistant pastor at Boston, when he found that the people there would not utterly condemn the English Church and separate from it. The Plymouth colonists were Separatists, and he served them for two years. But they found him "very unsettled in judgment," and were willing to have him leave them for Salem. He taught that magistrates could not enforce any religious duties, that the King of England could give the colonists no right to occupy the land that belonged to Indians, that the King had said what was not true, and that no man not a church member could rightly take an oath, nor the State require it of him. Finally he wrote a letter to the other churches, accusing the Massachusetts mag-

istrates, and refused communion with his own church at Salem unless it would separate from the other churches, which would not join him in his controversy. Thus he was banished from Massachusetts in 1636, and went first to Seekonk, east of Providence. When he was notified in a friendly way that this land belonged to the Plymouth Colony, he crossed the river and became the founder of the present second city of New England, and of a state where "soul liberty" prevailed. The first agreement made there was to obey orders of the majority for the public good, "only in civill things."

A year or more after coming to Providence, he became interested in the Baptists, though his preaching had not included their views before. He "repented" of his baptism in childhood in the Church of England, and was now baptized by a poor man who had never been baptized himself, after which Williams baptized him and ten other persons. But within a few weeks he concluded that this new baptism of his was unlawful and invalid. His followers, however, then founded the Baptist Church of Providence, the first one in this country. He became interested in baptism by immersion about ten years later.

Referring to Williams' loss of influence in his own colony at one time, John Cotton said, sarcastically, that he was "superseded with the rabble by a more prodigious minter of exorbitant novelties than himself."

Williams went to England twice for the charter of his colony, and wrote several books of religious controversy. In spite of his many strange ideas and his great fondness for dispute, he was a lovable man, and Winthrop, the Massachusetts Governor, was always his friend. In one of his many letters Winthrop wrote, "We have often tried your patience, but could never

conquer it." When the Indians offered Williams the island of Prudence to keep swine on, he proposed to Winthrop that they buy it together, for twenty fathoms of wampum and two coats, which they did. Its next owner was the grandfather of two of the first settlers of Bellingham, John and Sylvanus Scott.

Williams always kept the friendship of the Indians, and served both them and the white men many times in his long life as a peacemaker. In King Philip's War when the people of the main land generally fled to Rhode Island itself, and the citizens of the town of Warwick even set up their town government there on the island, he remained at Providence untroubled with twenty-seven other persons. He tried to tolerate all kinds of difference of opinion in both civil and religious matters as men do now, and his colony welcomed many a man who found either Massachusetts or Plymouth uncomfortable.

Cotton Mather scornfully said: "Rhode Island was occupied by Antinomians, Anabaptists, Quakers, Ranters and every thing else but Christians; and if any man has lost his religion, he may find it in this general muster of opinions, this receptacle of the convicts of Jerusalem and the outcasts of the land." Another witness of that time, who could not appreciate religious toleration, a Dutch minister in New York, wrote of Rhode Island, "where all kinds of scum dwell, for it is nothing else than a sink of New England."

The first man to come from Massachusetts was the mysterious William Blackstone. When the first white settlers reached Boston in 1630, they found him there apparently living alone. He took the oath of a citizen the next year, but never joined the church as the law after that time required. In fact he was an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, who had escaped

to this wilderness to be alone. In 1634 he grew tired of his neighbors, sold nearly all his land for thirty pounds, bought cows with the money and moved to Rhode Island. There he built a house that he called Study Hall, near Abbott's Run, close to the great river later named for him, and lived in seclusion, not without quarrels with his neighbors, as court records show, for forty years. He married a widow in 1659, and his descendants were few and lived rather solitary lives. He used to preach in Providence at times, and he gave children whom he met apples from his own trees, which were the first ones planted in both colonies. When he was old he used to ride down to Providence on a tame white bull. He died in 1675, just before King Philip's War, "which laid waste his fair domain." He had some three hundred acres of land and one hundred and eighty-six books. The house was burned and these were all lost. When Blackstone left Boston he said: "I came from England because I did not like the Lord Bishops, but I can not join with you because I would not be under the Lords Brethren."

About four miles from the home of this strange man, settled John Bartlett, the father of the first known inhabitant of Bellingham. He had lived in Weymouth and Mendon before. His house was near the present Lonsdale Railroad station, and he was one of the richest men of the colony, for his inventory in 1684 amounted to thirteen hundred pounds. His son, Jacob, our first citizen, grew up in a home of comfort and even more, where "soul liberty" was the first principle of society. The first land bought in Bellingham was purchased in 1696 by a man who believed that that government is best which governs least, and whose first public religious duty was to protest against the forms of the church. How could he then choose his home on land of the strictest Puritan

colony? He probably hoped to live outside it, and some of his deeds to his sons long after this time describe the land sold as being in either the Plymouth or the Massachusetts Colony. In fact his first purchase may now lie in Rhode Island, for the colony bounds were disputed even fifty years after his coming, and Bellingham seemed to lose almost a third of its valuation in 1746, when as a part of Attleboro Gore it was given by King George II to Rhode Island under the name of Cumberland. It was a No Man's Land that James Albee of Mendon sold to Jacob Bartlett of Providence in 1696, for five pounds, described as nine cow common rights undivided in the common land between Wrentham and Mendon. This deed was recorded in 1736, just forty years later. The purchase was confirmed to him by the Dedham vote of 1698. In 1713 again he received thirty-six acres by a vote at Dedham, and the book of records calls this their first grant of land. He acquired several other tracts here in the next twenty years.

Our first settler had little to fear from wild beasts. The town of Dedham had offered a reward of ten shillings for every wolf killed in early years, and this was increased to twenty in 1698, when very few were left. Six pence were offered for a rattlesnake in 1719, and twenty shillings for a wildcat, and they soon disappeared. The savage red men were gone, and Jacob Bartlett had only the strict laws of Massachusetts to fear; he escaped them for nearly thirty years, but found himself in Boston in prison at last for refusing to support the town church.

In 1738 he deeded his homestead to his son Joseph, who was very pious and was called a poet, and died in 1791. Joseph's brother Abner married Abigail Arnold in 1734. As a Quaker he was exempt from the Bellingham tax to support the town church in 1741. She died in

1815, at the age of one hundred and four years. (Another Quaker, John Aldrich, of Mendon, had twelve children all alive when the youngest was sixty, and their mother reached one hundred.) A third son of our pioneer was Jacob, Jr., who bought a part of his father's farm, and made scythes.

This first family in Bellingham lived in a true pioneer's region, with little interference from church or state. None of their births are found in town records, for the Quakers kept their own. They disapproved of inscriptions on gravestones, as being too ostentatious. All men should be equal in the grave, they thought.

Two traditions of Jacob Bartlett have been found in the vicinity of his farm, now East Woonsocket. He had a sick child one very cold day in winter, and walked across the Great River several miles to Sayles Hill for some milk, and found the cow frozen dead. Again when a dear child of his died, he kept the body so long that one of the neighbors knocked on his door one dark night and said, "Jacob, Jacob, bury thy dead." The answer was, "Yea, Lord, I will bury him in the morning." Their family burying ground had about two dozen rough stones left in 1879, and the old house then stood at the end of a lane from the highway, supposed to be one hundred and eighty-three years old. When Cumberland went to Rhode Island none of this family were left in Bellingham.

The intolerance of Massachusetts made trouble for Baptists as well as Quakers, and our second pioneer settler was a Baptist. His father, Walter Cook, like Jacob Bartlett's father, had moved from Weymouth to Mendon. With his sons John and Samuel he headed a temperance society there in 1685, promoted by Rev. Grindal Rawson, whose land joined his own. Nicholas

Cook was born there in 1660 and died in 1730. He married Joanna Rockett or Rockwood in 1684, and again in 1712 Mehitable Staples, both of Mendon. In 1705 land was laid out to him east of the Great River (Blackstone), and on both sides of Peters River. In 1706 "Nicholas Cook in behalf of himself and several of his neighbors, being new beginners and some of them very poor," asked relief from town taxes in Dedham for two years, and it was granted. In 1708 he was chosen constable for that part of the town, which shows that he was probably the principal citizen there. In 1713 he deeded land to his son Nicholas, Jr., which was partly in Mendon and partly in Bellingham. The next year there was a meeting of the proprietors of the common land between Wrentham and Mendon at the house of Deacon Thomas Sanford in Mendon (later Bellingham), which he soon sold to Pelatiah Smith. Capt. John Ware of Wrentham was moderator, and Thomas Sanford was chosen clerk for one year. They then drew lots for their second division. Their third meeting came in 1717 at the house of Nicholas Cook, and Thomas Sanford was its moderator. It was voted to complete the first and second divisions already made by June 30, 1717, and to lay out the third division after that. Two or three acres were voted for a burying place, the South Bellingham Cemetery, mentioned as "the burying place" in a deed of Sylvanus Scott to his son Joseph, in 1725. Here is still to be seen the stone of Nicholas Cook, who "Died Dec ye 1st 1730. In ye 71st year of his age." In 1718 the proprietors chose a committee to ask some relief from their share of church expenses in Dedham, which was about twenty-five miles away, and to settle the line between their land and Wrentham. This action showed the need of a new town, and it is the last recorded public

business for this territory before the new incorporation came.

Nicholas Cook had been one of the chief proprietors. His inventory amounted to twelve hundred pounds, eight hundred and eighty-two pounds in real estate. His oldest son Josiah received seventy-two acres, Nicholas, Jr., one hundred and five acres, and the most valuable part, thirty-seven acres valued at eight hundred pounds, went to the younger sons, David and Noah. Josiah was the first pastor of a Six Principle Baptist Church in Cumberland, not over two miles from his home, for thirty-five years, and his nephew, Nathaniel, called much superior to him, became his colleague in 1752, and served till his death in 1773 at the age of fifty-four, about a year before his uncle died. They found the source of their teaching in the sixth chapter of Hebrews: "Let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands &c. We are persuaded better things of you &c." William Blackstone was called the founder of this church. James Ballou, with two brothers came from Smithfield, Rhode Island, across the river to Cumberland, and he gave the land for the church in 1732. Here both uncle and nephew preached without a salary, and supported themselves with their own hands like their brethren, as Roger Williams had always done. "Elder Cook's Meeting House" was afterwards called the Ballou Meeting House, and the building erected in 1749 has been thought to be the oldest church in Rhode Island.

Elder Nathaniel Cook's father was Nicholas, Jr., born in 1687, who married Elizabeth Staples. Five years after the land was given for his brother's church, the Bellingham Baptist Church was formed and he was its first deacon. He and his brother Seth, with their

father, Nicholas, all signed the petition for the incorporation of Bellingham in 1719.

John Cook was Town Treasurer from 1802 to 1808 and John Cook, 2d, was Town Clerk from 1827 to 1837.

One hundred and sixty births of this name were recorded in this town before 1850.

CHAPTER V

EARLY SETTLERS

THE new town was made up of three parts. Rawson's Farm was the northeastern part and contained thirteen families at that time, from which at least eight men signed the petition for incorporation; the smaller northwest corner came from Mendon, and the heads of its four families all signed; the remaining two-thirds of the area belonged to Dedham, and its twenty-three families were represented by twenty signers. Nine other families came within the next ten years, and including the two pioneers Bartlett and Cook we have some knowledge of more than forty men who made the new town what it was in its early years.

RICHARD BLOOD

Richard Blood of Dedham, probably son of James Blood of Concord in 1639, bought in 1708 from several Dedham men "18 cow common rights in undivided land between Mendon, Wrentham and Providence," besides "three score & twelve acres already laid out in Rawson's Farm" for ten pounds sixteen shillings. In 1714 he bought from another Dedham man thirty-two acres belonging to four cow common rights in the first and second divisions still to be laid out. In 1736 he sold his homestead and one hundred and seventy-six acres in the south part of the town for twelve hundred pounds.

He was evidently well off. His wife's name was Joanna, and four children were born to them in 1721-9. The estate of Joseph his son included two bonds of five hundred pounds and three hundred and fifty pounds, and a total of seventeen hundred and forty-eight pounds. He had five children, born in 1738-48, but there were no other births of this name in town after that.

THOMAS BURCH

He was one of the three purchasers of Rawson's Farm from the secretary's son in 1701, and he bought one-fourth of it. He died in 1722, and his homestead was sold by his son Robert in 1735, one hundred and ten acres for six hundred and fifty pounds, to John Metcalf and Eliphalet Pond of Dedham. It was on both sides of the Country Road, as Hartford Avenue was called then, bounded north by Holliston and east by Charles River, now that part of Caryville next to Medway. His will left all his land to his two sons Thomas and Robert. No births of this name are recorded here.

BANFIELD CAPRON

He was one of the most prominent men in Bellingham in the early years, but he belonged to another town in 1748; his land became a part of Rhode Island when Massachusetts lost the town of Cumberland in 1746. When his father Banfield was about fourteen years old, he left his home with three schoolmates and sailed as a stowaway from some port in the north of England for America. He married a woman of Rehoboth, and lived in the town of Barrington about twenty years. Banfield Capron, second, 1682-1752, was a large, stout, resolute man, a mason and a weaver. He married Hannah Jenks,

granddaughter of the first settler of Pawtucket, and they had six sons and six daughters. In 1717 he bought one hundred acres for one hundred and twenty pounds, south of Peter's River, bounded south by Jacob Bartlett. In 1718 he bought twenty acres near a road to be laid out. In 1726 he sold to Joseph Scott, "bloomer," and David Aldrich, ninety-seven acres joining his homestead on the Rehoboth road, and the next year twenty-five acres on Bungay Brook to Richard Darling, blacksmith.

The Jenks family were handsome people who perished early like delicate flowers, and about 1738 his wife and six children all died within a few months. The doctor wept when he found two dead at once in the house. The son Charles, 1716-1789, married Mary, daughter of Joseph Scott, "bloomer," and in 1741 he bought with Uriah Jillson, for one hundred and forty-five pounds, seventy-two acres "in the Gore of land that is now in controversy between the Colony of Rhode Island and the Province of Massachusetts," bounded by the Great River, the Blackstone. Twelve of his children lived an average of seventy-five years each. The last record of his father Banfield is his appointment as a juror at Providence in 1748, when he belonged to Rhode Island. The Capron burying ground is still to be seen in Cumberland.

CHILSON

In 1699 William Chilson bought three cow common rights in land bounded north by Charles River, east by Wrentham, south by Attleboro and the Pawtucket River (Blackstone) and west by Mendon. One reason why this deed was not recorded till twenty-one years later, like others in the south part of the town, was the doubt whether it belonged to Massachusetts or Rhode Island. The

same doubt may have prevented the record of any early Chilson births in town. In 1731, the estate of John Chilson sold one hundred and ten acres near Peter's River. In 1727, Joseph Chilson's account of the estate of his father William was allowed. It included land in Mendon besides 12 acres in Bellingham and 18 more still to be laid out there. Joseph was town clerk for 9 years with one interval, and treasurer three years. The United States census of 1790 names every family in Bellingham, but no Chilsons; three Jillsons are given John, Joseph, and Joshua. The two names were confused together, for Joseph Chilson in 1778 willed his land near Peter's River, equally to his three sons; Joseph took the house and one hundred and fifteen acres, John, one hundred and eighty acres to the south, and Joshua, one hundred and seventy acres. Forty Chilsons were born in town by 1850.

DR. JOHN CORBET

He and his brother Daniel were two of the most influential signers of the petition for the new town of Bellingham. They were sons of Robert Corbet from Weymouth, who married Priscilla Rockwood of Mendon in 1682. Their land was at South Milford, on both sides of the Country Road. This was the oldest road in Bellingham, for it led from Mendon, the mother town, to Medfield and Boston, and had been used already for over half a century.

In 1669 a committee was chosen in Medfield to join one from Mendon "for the settling of the Common Rode way from town to town." It was laid out the next year, and became a part of the post road through Hartford from Boston to New York. Through travel was so scarce for a long time that as late as 1732 a monthly stage was

started between Boston and New York, taking two weeks each way.

The Hartford Turnpike, now Hartford Avenue, was incorporated about 1796, and one of the toll houses was at the present Green Store. A keeper who lived there was so shiftless that when his charitable neighbors planted potatoes for him in the spring, they were at once dug and eaten up. The Corbet land began opposite the Bicknell Cemetery and reached along this road to the north beyond the Charles River, which was called the Second Bridge River, because the Mendon people had crossed Mill River just before they reached the Corbet land as they started for Boston. The larger part of this land fell within the new town.

John Corbet was the oldest son, born in 1683, and he was brought up in a liberal way by his grandfather, John Rockwood, whose property he inherited. He was the first educated doctor in this region. He married in 1703, Mehitable Rockwood, born in 1683, and had six children. He had a good practice for twenty-three years, and died in 1726.

Some of the items in his estate were these:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| Apparel | 33£ | Bills of credit | 82£ | Bees | 31 s. |
| Books | 51£ | Bond | 182£ | Sheep | 2£ 6 s. 6 d. |
| "Physic powders" | 10£ | Land | 1362£ | Best horse | 18£ 15 s. |
| Military arms | 5£ 10 s. | Cows | 31£ | Other horses | 38£ |
| Two silver spoons | 55 s. | Young cattle | 13£ | | |

His will left eighteen hundred and seventy-three pounds in all; to his son John, two-thirds of his real estate, all his "books of physic" and the office of executor of the unsettled estate of his great-grandfather, John Rockwood; to his son Joseph, certain real estate and "one good Horse beest" etc.; to the Bellingham church, five pounds for "Vesels for the Lord's Supper."

Elder Daniel Corbet, his brother, married in 1717, Sarah Jones, 1694-1753. When the Congregational Church in Bellingham disbanded in 1744, they joined the one in Milford instead. He and his brother-in-law, John Jones, Jr., exchanged farms with each other in 1749. Jones came to his farm of three hundred acres at Bellingham Center, and he took four hundred acres at North Purchase in Milford. His inventory showed five hundred and sixty-nine pounds in real and two hundred and fifty-six pounds in personal property, the latter including a negro boy, bed, bedding, axe, and hoe at forty pounds, four shillings, five pence.

The second Dr. John Corbet was born in 1704, educated for a doctor like his father, and lived on the same estate for ninety years. "A man of ardent feelings and uncommon decision of character." In 1740 he mortgaged three hundred acres of land to help circulate what were called manufacturers' bills of credit, which were intended to help farmers sell their products on better terms. This was a patriotic deed, for the public need was great.

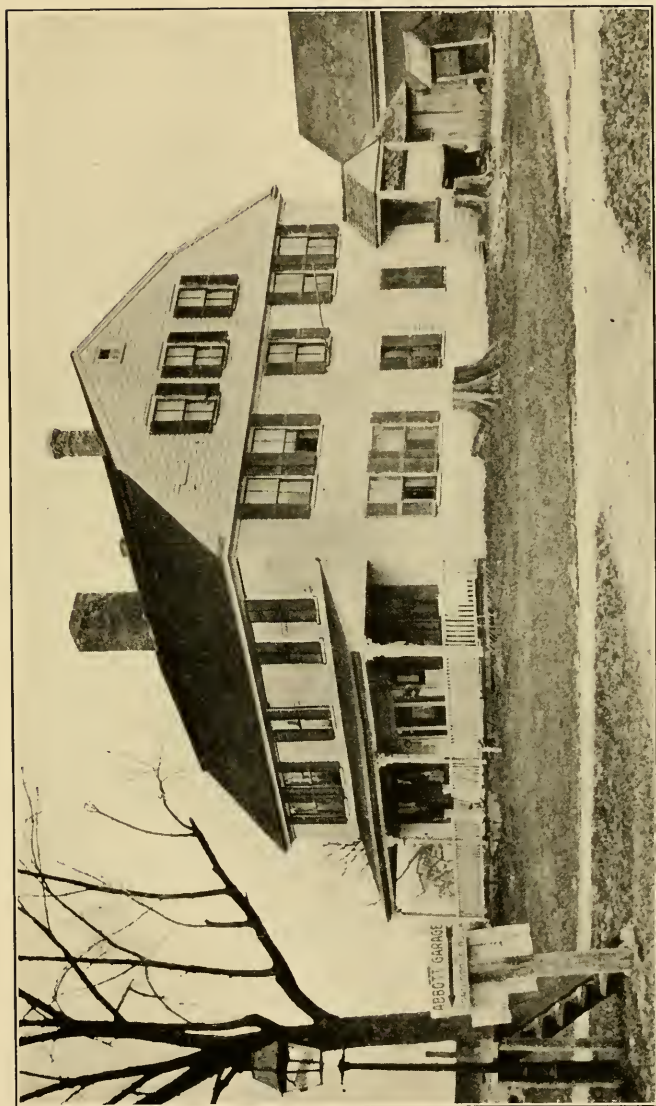
As a colony, Massachusetts had no right to coin money. The French and Indian wars called for large public expenditures, and gold and silver became very scarce. At one time six hundred and fifty-three thousand ounces of Spanish silver and thirty tons of British copper coins were imported. The amount of paper in circulation reached over two million pounds, and it became worth as little as one-eleventh of its face value. Bills of old tenor always meant of less value than new ones. This kind of money was used for fifty-nine years, and there were many attempts at reform. In 1740, three hundred and ninety-three men started this one, which was also called the Land Bank. Members were to pay cash for one-fifth of one

per cent of their stock, and give their notes at three per cent for twenty years for the balance, payable in almost any of the products of the colony. The governor opposed the plan as a fraud, and when the General Court authorized it, he vetoed the bill and discharged all State officials who had favored it. Nevertheless the scheme was put into operation and bills were issued, but a law of the British Parliament forbade such issues the next year. Many poor people were indignant at the opposers of the bank which was to be such a help to them, and in some towns in our county there was talk of a mob assembling to march to Boston. Notices were posted on meeting houses and a few leaders were arrested, but the uprising never took place. Special commissioners were appointed to wind up the bank's affairs, and it took nearly thirty years to do it.

The second Dr. Corbet was Town Treasurer in 1739, 1741, and 1764.

During the last part of his life he had a difficulty of speech and of walking besides; but by using a kind of chair on wheels and a well trained horse he was able to keep up a large practice, even at his great age.

Dr. Corbet's daughter Bethiah married Dr. Samuel Leslie Scammell, born in 1739, the son of Dr. Samuel Leslie Scammell, who came with his brother Alexander from Portsmouth in England. They settled here in 1737, and the first Dr. Scammell practised here till 1753. His son Samuel studied with a doctor in Boston, and then with Dr. Corbet, whose daughter he married. He practised here from 1760 to 1805, and inherited Dr. Corbet's great house near the railroad at South Milford. His brother Alexander graduated at Harvard in 1769, and became adjutant-general of the American army. He is one of the characters in S. W. Mitchell's novel, "Hugh Wynne,



THE HOME OF DR. JOHN CORBET 2d, DR. S. L. SCAMMEL, DR. S. L. SCAMMEL 2d
AND DR. JOHN SCAMMEL

Free Quaker.” A third Dr. Scammell was named John, born in 1762. He had little to do as a doctor, for Dr. Thurber was considered far above the other physicians. The two Corbets and the three Scammells practised here for one hundred and twenty-five years. The last Dr. Scammell was perhaps more interested in his property and business than his profession. His grandson was the first settled lawyer in Milford, and he himself carried out a plan of his grandfather, the second Dr. John Corbet, who asked permission to build a dam for a sawmill on his land on Charles River at the Second Bridge. He was refused, perhaps because the first mill in Mendon was at Mill River less than a mile away or because he would need to raise or change the highway for his dam. In 1812 Dr. Scammell sold to the firm of Penniman, Scammell & Co., for twelve hundred dollars, land “for a manufactory now building,” and this business became the “Bellingham woolen and cotton manufactory,” incorporated in 1814 with a capital of fifteen thousand dollars.

The Corbets, and perhaps some of their neighbors, kept slaves, and there is a gravestone in a cemetery not far away to “Cleopatra, a girl of color aged 16 years.” In 1819 the town of Milford sued the town of Bellingham for the support of Bess Corbett, a negro. She was given by Dr. Corbet to his granddaughter, who married Amariah Frost, Jr., of Milford. He denied that either he or his wife owned her. She was decided to be a citizen of Milford.

DARLING

John and Cornelius Darling were sons of Dennis Darling of Braintree. Captain John was born before 1667 and had three wives and thirteen children. His will in 1753 speaks of being “grown antient,” and leaves twelve

equal shares to twelve children. Cornelius was born in 1675. In 1707 he bought of Dr. John Corbet for five pounds, twenty acres from the ninety acres bought by the doctor's grandfather, John Rockwood, whose estate he settled, with twenty-two cow common rights and two sheep rights. In 1721 he deeded twenty-four acres to his son Cornelius, Jr. The brothers John and Cornelius were both weavers as well as farmers. Samuel the third signer of the Bellingham petition of this family, was John's son. Fifteen Darlings were born in town before 1750, and one hundred and fifteen, before 1850.

Ahimaaz Darling lived in a great house on Lake Street, with two immense chimneys built of field stones.

ZURIEL HALL

He was the grandson of William Hall of Newport, 1639 and Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 1644. His son with the strange name Zuriel died in 1691 and left a son Zuriel, who married in 1697 Hannah Sheffield of Sherborn, and he came to Bellingham. He bought of William Jenks of Providence in 1714 for one hundred pounds, one hundred acres with fifty acres more to be laid out in the third division. He left a son Zuriel third, 1717-1765. Twenty-nine Halls were reported born here before 1800, and only two after that.

HAYWARDS

The Bellingham petition was signed by four Haywards: Jonathan, Oliver, William, and Samuel. This family was so numerous in Mendon, Milford and Bellingham that it is impossible to be sure of their relationship in some cases; three William Haywards died here within twenty years, each leaving a family.

Samuel Hayward of Swansea bought land in Mendon in 1672, and had younger brothers William and Jonathan. His son William married in 1708 as his second wife Priscilla Marsh, widow of Samuel Marsh of Salem, who came to Mendon with her son John, born in 1681. In 1700 and 1701 with Thomas Sanford and Thomas Burch in two purchases he bought Rawson's Farm of eighteen hundred and forty acres, of which he took half, as has already been told. In 1712, "Wm Hayward of the farms adjacent to Mendon" deeded to his son Jonathan, probably the oldest, "three score acres," bounded by Thomas Burch, Pelatiah Smith and east by Charles River. In 1716 he deeded to his son Samuel his homestead of which he had given him a third in 1712, near the Country Road, Smith land, Stall River and the burying place (North Bellingham cemetery), with other land in the seven hundred acres and a lot in the eight hundred acres. He made his will in 1712 too, and it was probated in 1718, too early for him to sign the Bellingham petition. That was signed by two of his sons, Jonathan and Oliver. The will divided his personal property equally among five sons and five daughters, and mentioned his sawmill probably on Stall Brook. The widow was omitted, but she received her share.

The William who signed the petition probably died in 1737. His will mentions two sons, Eleazer and Ebenezer, the daughter Sarah and her children and the homestead of one hundred and twenty acres southeast of Charles River. She married James Smith in 1728, the second son of Pelatiah Smith, senior, who came from Bridgewater to Bellingham and bought Thomas Sanford's "mansion House" and land for three hundred pounds. They named their girl and boy Elizabeth and Hayward.

This second William, the signer, may have been the son

of the third William to leave a will, dated 1729 in Mendon. He married Esther Harbor, and left sons named William and John, and a grandson Samuel, son of his deceased son Samuel. This latter Samuel, in his will dated 1722, mentions his son Samuel under twenty-one years of age, his wife Hannah, two daughters, one Elizabeth under eighteen, and a younger son Caleb. His large estate amounted to ten hundred and eighty-two pounds. This Samuel sold his son William in 1713 for an annuity of four pounds, ten shillings a year, the first homestead lot he had in Mendon, an eleven-and-one-half acre right there.

So the four Haywards to sign the petition were two pairs of brothers, Jonathan and Oliver, the sons of William who bought half of Rawson's Farm, and died in 1718, and William and Samuel, probably the sons of William of Mendon, who died in 1729.

In another account of this family, William Hayward of Weymouth and Braintree, whose wife was Margery, was the father of William who married second Priscilla Marsh, and bought Rawson's Farm. They had four sons, and these sons were the four signers of our petition. Samuel was the favorite, who left the large estate.

In the North Bellingham cemetery is a stone with this inscription:

"Mrs Mary Relict of Mr Eleazer Hayward Mar 15 1814 in the hundred & second year of her age."

Twenty-four Haywards were born in Bellingham by 1750, and fifty by 1850.

HOLBROOK

Peter Holbrook of Mendon deeded to his son John, in 1706, sixty acres near the east side of Beaver Pond River,

through which land ran the Country Road (Hartford Avenue) four rods wide. This John died in 1757, leaving a wife Hannah, and five sons and two daughters. He was the first town treasurer, and held the office for seven years. Three years later he began to be town clerk for the same length of time. Two of his brothers were Peter and Eliphalet, and these were three of the four Mendon families set off to Bellingham. In 1712, Peter Holbrook, Sr., deeded to his son Peter about seventy acres near the Country Road and Beaver Pond River. Eliphalet Holbrook obtained of Silvanus Holbrook in 1716 by exchange sixty-five acres on the Country Road and Beaver Pond River. He with Jonathan Thomson and Joseph Wight received in 1744 the deed from Elnathan Wight of the land for the first Baptist church at Crimpville. In 1767, Eliphalet Holbrook, weaver, deeded his homestead on both sides of the road from Mendon to Boston to his son Eliphalet. He was town clerk for six years at three different times, and treasurer for twelve years in all at five different times. He died in 1777 and left eight children.

The fourth Holbrook to sign the petition was Joseph, ancestor of A. H. Holbrook of High Street, who died in 1750. He was a Baptist, and when Brown University was started he rode horseback to New Jersey, though over sixty years old, to find a professor for it.

Aaron Holbrook was town clerk eight years, and treasurer nine years; Amos H., clerk three; Eliab, clerk two, treasurer two; Eliphalet, clerk six and treasurer twelve; John, clerk eight, and treasurer seven; Joseph, clerk two, and treasurer one, and Valentine W., treasurer two years.

Twenty-eight Holbrooks were born here before 1750 and one hundred and ninety before 1850, making this the largest family in town.

INGALLS

Edmund Ingalls, the son of Robert and grandson of Henry, was born in Lincolnshire, England, and came to Salem in 1628. He was one of the six first settlers of Lynn. His son John, born in England in 1625, married Elizabeth Barrett of Salem, and was a member of the church at Bristol, Rhode Island, in 1687. He settled at Rehoboth and died there in 1721, called "Old John Ingols." His son Edmund married Eunice Luddin there in 1705. In 1716 he bought from his brother John, of Dedham, one hundred and twenty-seven acres in two lots with twenty cow commons, bounded on the "Potockett River" (Blackstone). In 1720 he bought forty-four acres "between Providence, Mendon and Wrentham," with eighteen cow commons. These brothers showed some perseverance in settling here after the welcome which the Dedham people had given them in 1703: "Upon Information that a stranges John Ingules by name is about to settel him selfe upon some of the remote lands of our Town the select men have this day given out a warrant to the Constable to warne him to depart out of this Town & the precincts thereof." He stayed, nevertheless, and was on the assessors' list in 1705.

JILLSON

James Gelson or Jillson bought one share in the Rehoboth North Purchase, made from the Indian Wamsutta, brother of King Philip, which included Attleboro, Cumberland, etc., in 1661. He and his wife Mary both died in 1712. Their son Nathaniel 1675-1757, lived in Attleboro. The town clerk there wrote his name Jelson. He sold his share of his father's estate in 1712, and was the first settler in what was later called the Attleboro Gore. One day the Indians set his cabin afire when his wife and

two small sons, James and Nathaniel, were at a spring where she was washing clothes, but they all escaped.

In 1714 the Bellingham proprietors laid out to him seventy-four acres, also in 1718, forty-seven acres "adjoining where his house standeth," now supposed to be in Woonsocket. In 1730 he bought for forty pounds, forty-two acres in Iron Rock Meadow. In 1735 he deeded his homestead of sixty acres to his son Nathaniel, Jr., and in 1743, nine cow commons to his two sons Nathaniel and Uriah. Nathaniel Jillson and his son Nathaniel were exempt from the tax for the town church in 1738 as Quakers. He died in 1751, and his estate was six hundred and eight pounds. Nathaniel, Jr., was a large land owner and a member of the Cumberland town council. Both brothers were chosen officers at the first town meeting there, and Uriah was a Justice of the Peace. Seven children of the two brothers were recorded in Bellingham from 1729 to 1735.

JOHN MARSH

John Marsh at Salem in 1637 married Susanna Skelton, the daughter of the first minister there. Her sister Elizabeth was the mother of Deacon Thomas Sanford, one of the purchasers of Rawson's Farm. Two of John's sons, Zachary and Samuel, with their wives had the courage to sign a protest in 1691 when John Procter and his wife were tried for witchcraft, and testified to their good character. Samuel's wife was Priscilla Tompkins, and after his death she came to Mendon with her son John Marsh, born in 1681, where in 1708 she married William Hayward. John Marsh married Abigail Morse and they had six children, between 1716 and 1726. He bought part of Rawson's Farm from

Thomas Sanford, his father's first cousin, about 1712, and died in 1727. He was the second Town Clerk, chosen six times. His estate was six hundred and thirty pounds. His son John was a soldier at Crown Point, and *his* son John lived with Indians for seven years, from 1772 to 1779.

ELEAZAR PARTRIDGE

His father John was at Dedham in 1652 and settled at Medfield the next year. Indians burned his buildings, grain and cattle in 1676. Eleazar was the fourth of ten children. He bought in 1720 for two hundred and sixty pounds, one hundred and two acres "of wild land" in Rawson's Farm, one-twelfth of the seven hundred and forty acres, and other tracts, all from Thomas Sanford, with the buildings. His wife brought with her from Medfield a small homemade chest which I have now, with the date 1694 carved upon it. The name Partridge-town came from this family, and one of the descendants still owns a part of the original land. Eleazar Partridge was the third town clerk, and his son Benjamin was treasurer four years and schoolmaster. Benjamin's great great grandson, George F. Partridge, a graduate of Harvard College and a Boston high school teacher, is the author of this book. Sixty births of this name were recorded to 1850.

CALEB PHILLIPS

He was an early settler soon after the incorporation, probably the grandson of Deacon Nicholas Phillips of Weymouth in 1640, whose third child was named Caleb. In 1727 Silvanus Scott sold to Caleb Phillips of Roxbury, husbandman, land near Nicholas Cook and Mendon line for one hundred and forty-two pounds. In 1762 Caleb

Phillips of Bellingham deeded to his son Caleb eighty acres near "the old meeting house," and in the same year land to his grandson Caleb third. He and his wife Susan had seven children born from 1734 to 1749. He was town treasurer for five years.

SAMUEL RICH

He was a carpenter, and bought a part of Rawson's Farm from Thomas Sanford in 1702. He signed the petition for a new town, but probably he was disappointed in not finding more new buildings to work on, for he sold his whole purchase to Eleazar Partridge the next year and no more is heard of him.

DEACON THOMAS SANFORD

He had sold his land here when the town was formed, and probably lived in Mendon then, and yet no one had more to do with it than he. He was the son of Robert Sanford who was in the First Church of Boston in 1651, and sold land on Court Street there in 1678, but went to Swansea. He married Elizabeth Skelton, the daughter of the first minister of Salem, and the great aunt of John Marsh, who bought his Bellingham estate of Thomas Sanford in 1712. Thomas was born at Swansea in 1763, and was a town officer there at twenty years old, and later, town clerk. He was at Mendon in 1700, and bought Rawson's Farm with Hayward and Burch as has been told in 1700 and 1701. He sold a part of his share of the farm in 1702 to John Marsh and Samuel Rich, and the rest later for three hundred pounds to Pelatiah Smith, including about two hundred acres near Stall Brook "now laid to Mendon," his share of a sawmill there, and his "mansion

house," which must have been something grand to need such a description. He went to live in Mendon, and was chairman of a committee there in 1735, to oppose the formation of the East Precinct, which became the town of Milford, forty-five years later.

His wife's first name was Christian, and that rare name was given to one of her daughters, who was my great great great grandmother. Her sister Bathsheba or Bathshua, as they called her, married David Holmes of Woodstock, Connecticut. She was a remarkable woman and lived to a great age. She did much of the work of a country doctor, and in the great snowstorm of 1717 she left her house by a window and traveled on snow shoes with the help of a long pole carried by two men, to care for a sick woman in the next town. She was the great great grandmother of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Thomas Sanford's second wife, Tabitha, was murdered by a negro named Jeffs in Mendon about 1745 or 1750, who struck her with an axe as she stepped up from the kitchen into the main house with a basket of cheeses. He hid in a great pine tree and watched the funeral from there, the story says, but was caught when he came down. He was the first criminal executed in Worcester County, and the Mendon doctor kept his skeleton.

In his old age Thomas Sanford lived with his daughters in Medway, where he died in 1764, ninety-one years old. The Bellingham records contain the following statement: "I Thomas Sanford resident in Medway, being now in the 87th year of my age, testifie that in the year 1700 I purchased one quarter and Wm Hayward one half and Thomas Burch the other quarter of 800 acres of land of Wm Rawson his wife and his sons, being the N E part of 1840 acres of land lying between Sherborn, Mendon and Dedham land, and in the year 1701 I with said Wm

Hayward and Thomas Burch purchased of said Wm Rawson 740 acres of land in the aforesaid 1840 acres. being westerly of the said first purchase, the two purchases containing all the Northeast part of the 1840 acres next to Sherborn, as by said deed may more fully appear. That I removed on the said first purchase of 800 acres in the year 1701, and lived there 14 years."

Thomas Sanford

1673 — 1764

SCOTT

Joseph and Sylvanus Scott were brothers and came from a remarkable family. Their grandfather Richard came from England in the ship *Griffin* in 1631, and another passenger was Katherine Marbery, who came with her married sister the famous Mrs. Ann Hutchinson. She soon dared to criticize the ministers of the Massachusetts colony on doctrinal subjects, held religious meetings for women and made so much excitement in this way that she was banished, and went first to Roger Williams' colony. The younger sister Katherine married Richard Scott in 1637 or 1638, and they settled at Ipswich. In November, 1634, two men of that town named Scott and Eliot had lost their way in the woods and wandered about hungry for six days, till they were found at last and brought in by a Rhode Island Indian. Governor Winthrop says that "the Scotts went to Providence because the wife of one of them was affected with Anabaptistry," and they "wanted no Magistrates."

Here Richard Scott bought the estate of Joshua Verrin, a troublesome neighbor of Roger Williams, who forbade his wife to go to church. He had vexed the colony for some time, and it was voted in 1637 that he "shall be withheld from the libertie of voting till he shall" change his course. He went back to Salem where he came from, and demanded recompense for the property which he had left. Winthrop says in 1638: "At Providence things grew still worse; for a sister of Mrs. Hutchinson, the wife of one Scott, being infested with Anabaptistry and going last year to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was taken or rather emboldened by her to make open profession thereof and was rebaptized." As Mrs. Scott was probably the most influential woman in Providence, so her husband became a leader among the men. In 1650 he was the largest taxpayer there but one. About 1651 he bought the island of Patience of Roger Williams, which he and Governor Winthrop had owned together. Scott said of Williams, "I have been his neighbor these 38 years. I walked with him in the Baptist ways."

But he had changed his ways long before then, and like Jacob Bartlett's father, his neighbor, had become a Quaker, called the first one in Rhode Island. When Roger Williams returned from England in triumph with a charter for his colony in 1644, which made it free from the interference of its persecuting neighbor, Massachusetts, Richard Scott might be expected to rejoice with the rest; but his Quaker's hate of ostentation and the pride of heart which it expresses, led him to write this: "And there he got a charter; and coming from Boston to Providence, at Sea-conch the Neighbors of Providence met him with fourteen Canoes, and carried him to Providence. And the Man being hemmed in in the middle

of the Canoes, was so Elevated and Transported out of himself, that I was condemned in myself that amongst the rest I had been an Instrument to set him up in his Pride and Folly."

Some of the members of this new sect became fanatics in their public protests against the ceremonies of church and state, and they suffered persecution in various countries. In Rehoboth, Massachusetts, a town that joined Providence, lived a man named Obadiah Holmes. In 1651 he was whipped at Boston with thirty stripes for preaching while excommunicated, rebaptizing persons who had been baptized, preaching against infant baptism, etc. John Hazell, perhaps the first settler at Pawtucket on the east side of the river, went to Boston as his friend, and was arrested and fined. He was an old man, and died before he reached home again. The Scotts heard about all these things and the dragon persecution soon reached out after them.

In 1657 Roger Williams, the President of Rhode Island, brought "Katherine the wife of Richard Scott" and others into court "as common opposers of all authority," but when neither he nor any one else appeared to testify against them, they were acquitted.

The year before this Christopher Holder and seven other Quakers had sailed from England, and he had come to Massachusetts and been sent away. Now he appeared again at Salem, where he got thirty stripes and was expelled. The next year when he came to Boston again, he and two other young men had their right ears cut off in prison. Katherine Scott's daughter Mary was engaged to marry him, and her mother traveled to Boston to encourage him in his suffering. An old Quaker book, Bishop's "New England Judged," says:

"Katherine Scott of Providence, a Mother of many

children (11), a Grave Sober Ancient Woman and of good Breeding, coming to see the Execution of These as afore-said, whose ears you cutt off, and saying upon their doing it in private, 'That it was evident they were going to act the Works of Darkness or else they would have brought them forth and declared their Offence, that others may hear and fear' Ye committed her to prison and gave her Ten Cruel Stripes with a threefold corded knotted Whip, the 2d day of 8th mo 1658. Though ye knew her Father Mr Marbury . . . yet ye whipped her for all that, and told her that ye were likely to have a Law to hang her if she came thither again. She answered, 'He whom we love will make us not to count our Lives dear with ourselves for the sake of his Name.' To which your Governor John Endicott replied, 'And we shall be as ready to take away your Lives as ye shall be to lay them down.'

The next June her little daughter Patience, journeyed the forty miles to Boston to make her protest too. Bishop says: "Ye apprehended Wm Robinson . . . and Patience Scott, daughter of Katherine, (a Girl of about 11 Years old, whose Business to youwards from her father's house in Providence was, To bear witness against your persecuting Spirit), and sent them to Prison—(the Child it seems was not of Years as to Law, to deal with her by Banishment, but otherwise in Understanding, for she confounded ye; and some of ye confest that ye had many Children, and they had been well Educated, and that it were well if they could say half as much for God, as she could for the Devil (as ye Blasphemed the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth that spoke in her, saying it was an Unclean Spirit.)" Another account says that Patience Scott, eleven years old, "was moved of the Lord to go to Boston (40 miles) to bear witness against the rulers." After an imprisonment of about three months, she

was released, and Secretary Rawson wrote: "The Court duly considering the malice of Satan and his instruments, by all means and ways to propagate error and disturb the truth, and bring in confusion among us, that Satan is put to his shifts to make use of such a child, not being of the years of discretion, nor understanding the principles of religion, judge meet so far to slight her as a Quaker, as only to admonish and instruct her according to her capacity and so discharge her; Capt. Hutchinson undertaking to send her home."

In October the older engaged sister went too:

"8th of 8th mo 1659. One Mary Scot Daughter to Richard & Katherine Scot of Providence aforesaid, who came also to visit the said Christopher in prison, whom the same constable Apprehended as she was in the Prison to Visit her Friend . . . your Governour committed also to Prison. 12th of 9th mo. Rawson your Secretary read to them their Sentences, to be whipped in the street. Christopher Holder sentenced to Banishment on pain of Death. Mary Scot to be delivered to your Governour to be admonished. The prisoners were then returned to prison for their jailor's fees, till freed by friends who gave surety."

"I have walked Step by Step through your cruel Proceedings to see if I could find any Justice. Your Declaration is: The Consideration of our gradual Proceeding will vindicate us from the Clamorous Accusation of Severity, our own Just Defense calling upon us, (other Means failing) to offer this Point, which these Persons have violently rushed upon;—our former Proceedings and the sparing of Mary Dyer—will manifestly evidence that we desire their Lives absent, rather than their Deaths present.

EDWARD RAWSON *Secret.*"

The Quaker writer had no difficulty in replying to this defence.

Katherine Scott lived a long time after that, and died in 1687, five years after her husband. No stone was set upon his grave. Both he and his son John fought in King Philip's War, and John was badly wounded near Pawtucket.

Richard Scott's grandsons, Joseph born in 1697 and Sylvanus, in 1702 came from Pawtucket to Bellingham. In 1721 Joseph Scott, son of Sylvanus of Providence, "Bloomer," bought one-fourth of a Bloomary Iron Works in Mendon on the "Pentucket River at the Great Falls." He was called a Bloomer because he had made iron from the ore near Pawtucket. This foundry was at Woonsocket near the land of Nicholas Cook. In 1725 he bought another quarter of the same Bloomary, and his father's house and one hundred and six acres in Bellingham, bounded north by Zuriel Hall, east by common land and the burying place, south by common land and Richard Blood and west by Mendon. This was the burying place laid out at the proprietors' third meeting in 1717. The next year he bought from Banfield Capron ninety-seven acres joining his own estate by the road from Bellingham to Rehoboth. This property he sold for two hundred and twenty pounds to Elisha Newell in 1740. Later he bought Richard Blood's estate of one hundred and seventy-six acres which joined his own on the south for twelve hundred pounds.

In 1727 he and three of his neighbors had occasion to remember his grandmother's journey to Boston seventy years before. The General Court records show that Jacob Bartlett, David Cook, Josiah Cook and Joseph Scott in jail in Boston petitioned for release because their consciences do not allow them to pay the town tax for

the support of the minister. The request was refused by a vote of the Representatives, but the Council did not agree and ordered them released if they gave bond to appear at the next meeting of the Court, when the town was ordered to present its case against them. That meeting was unexpectedly postponed for about a year, and there were similar cases in other towns. A thorough search at the State House has not shown any further record of the case.

Joseph Scott and his wife Elizabeth had four children recorded in Bellingham from 1724 to 1733. He died in 1742. His inventory mentions: Best suit head to foot, eighteen pounds, one sixteenth of a Bloomary, best dwelling house, two hundred and twenty pounds, another, one hundred and ten pounds, land, twenty-nine hundred and fourteen pounds; total, forty-three hundred and thirty-two pounds, certainly the largest estate in town.

His brother Sylvanus bought one hundred and forty-three acres in 1725, bounded by Wrentham line, Sergeant Darling and common land. He and his wife Mary had five children recorded in Bellingham from 1726 to 1734. He died in 1777, and left two sons named David and John.

One of the largest stones in the South Bellingham cemetery is inscribed:

"These two died with small pox. In Memory of Mr Silvanus Scott who Died April 17 1777 in ye 76th year of his age. In Memory of Mrs Joanna wife of Mr Silvanus Scott. She died April 20 1777.

In 1817 Joseph's grandsons Samuel and Saul occupied his land at Scott Hill, which has been in the same family nearly two centuries. Seventy persons of this name were born in Bellingham before 1850.

PELATIAH SMITH

Pelataiah Smith the first lived in West Bridgewater, where he bought land in 1701, but came from there to Bellingham. He is the only one of the first settlers to be called "Gentleman" in his deeds. In 1714 he bought for three hundred pounds of Thomas Sanford "his Mansion house" on Rawson's Farm, "now laid to Mendon" with nearly a fourth of the eight hundred acres, all of Sanford's land that he had not sold to Marsh and Rich, including one-fourth of a sawmill on Stall Brook. In 1715 he mortgaged these two hundred acres to the Massachusetts Commission for issuing fifty thousand pounds of bills of credit, for fifty-eight pounds at five per cent. He was the first town clerk of Bellingham. He sold land on Stall Brook in 1723. His will calls him blacksmith. It left all his property to his wife Jane, and his son James refused to act as executor with her. He died in 1727, and left seven hundred and fifty pounds. His gravestone is in the North Bellingham Cemetery, and only eight others now there are earlier.

Pelataiah Smith

1657 — 1727

Two of his sons signed the Bellingham petition, James and Samuel, and two others, Pelataiah and Robert may be mentioned. The oldest son Pelataiah, 1659 to 1757, married Eunice ——— in Bellingham in 1752. They had a daughter Margaret born in 1754 and only one son, Robert. They were the ones to begin keeping the principal tavern in the town, where stages stopped on their way from Boston to Hartford, and changed horses. There is a milestone in front of it which says: "31 miles from

Boston R S 1767." His will left only forty-one acres of land.

James Smith was born in 1697 and married Sarah Hayward in 1728. He was town clerk in 1728 and 1729. He was a blacksmith, and sold land to John Metcalf in 1742, Daniel Penniman in 1747, and Joseph Rockwood in 1755. Samuel Smith, the other signer, was born in 1699 and bought land of his father Pelatiah in 1723 near Stall River. The fourth brother Robert was called Captain. He lived from 1704 to 1787.

The third Pelatiah and the last to keep the tavern lived from 1806 to 1892, and married Julia Bates. He had the south end of the great house set off to him, and a driveway to it beside Stall Brook. Three of his sons were Whitman, Stephen and Frank. Whitman kept a stall in Quincy Market, Boston, and he spent much money on the farm where his brothers lived. Their father Pelatiah had died in poverty. His house, the successor of Thomas Sanford's mansion, and probably the largest dwelling house in town, belongs now to the Bellingham Woolen Company. The last Pelatiah had a brother Robert, whose daughter Amanda Adams was ninety-four years old April 29, 1919. She remembers hearing that her grandmother went shopping to Boston on horseback with chickens in her saddlebags. Fifty Smiths were born in Bellingham before 1850.

ISAAC AND EBENEZER THAYER

Their grandfather was Ferdinando, who married Huldah Hayward in Braintree and was one of the founders of Mendon. His son Isaac married Mercy Rocket or Rockwood there. Their son Isaac was born in 1695 and Ebenezer in 1697. In 1717 Ebenezer bought of Josiah

Thayer of Mendon a large tract of land between Mendon and Wrentham, Charles River and Attleboro and Pawtucket, and fifty-two acres at the Dedham Tree with eight cow commons and two sheep commons. In July 1719, just before the incorporation, he sold to Robert Smith of Roxbury, seventy acres on a branch of Peter's River. His will in 1723 also mentions land laid out to him in 1715 on Saddleback Hill, and land bought in 1721. His homestead was partly in Bellingham and partly in Mendon.

As a Quaker, Jonathan Thayer was exempt from the tax for the town church in 1744.

Isaac Thayer had thirteen children. His estate was sold to Oliver Pond in 1765.

Cornelius, Ellery, Jonathan, and Manning Thayer have been town treasurer one year each; Horatio, two years; Elias, ten; Francis, eighteen; and his father Ruel, twenty-two years. Ruel was town clerk also for four years.

Six Thayer families recorded twenty-five births from 1721 to 1750, and one hundred and sixty Thayers were born before 1850, the second largest family in town in this respect.

THOMPSON

Five signers of the Bellingham petition had this name, John, his three sons, John, Joseph and Samuel, and Ebenezer. The family was prominent in Mendon from the earliest years. John Thompson of Mendon, weaver, deeded in 1701 to his oldest son John, land bounded on the west by Nicholas Cook. The deed was recorded in 1716. In 1721 he deeded to his son Joseph, fifty acres on both sides of Beaver Dam Brook. In 1732 he sold eighty acres to Dr. Corbet. In 1749 he sold land on the

road from the meeting house to Charles River (at Crimpville). He died that year and left six sons and three daughters.

Ebenezer Thompson, housewright, bought of Joseph Holbrook for two hundred and fifty pounds in 1730 his homestead on both sides of the Country Road.

John Thompson, Sr., was town treasurer one year, his son John four years, Jonathan three, and Joseph fourteen years. Jonathan was clerk four years and Cyrus one year.

Eight Thompson families had thirty-eight births recorded from 1728 to 1744, and one hundred Thompsons were born here before 1850.

WIGHT

Joseph Wight, who came to Bellingham in 1729, was the grandson of Thomas Wight who was at Watertown in 1635 and Dedham in 1637. He and his wife Alice moved to Medfield. Their son Samuel married Hannah Albee, and his house was burned by Indians. His son Joseph was born in 1675, married Mrs. Martha Thayer of Bellingham in 1725, and they came here four years later. His name with that of his son Elnathan is in the first list of the Baptist Church in 1738. In 1741 he sold to Elnathan for six hundred pounds, ninety acres in three pieces. Sixty acres with the house were bounded by Captain Oliver Hayward, Deacon Joseph Holbrook and Dr. John Corbet. This son Elnathan deeded to three trustees the lot for the first building of the Baptist Church on High Street, at Crimpville in 1744. The site was marked in 1912 at the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the church. Elnathan Wight, 1715 to 1761, after giving the land studied several years and then became its first settled pastor in 1750. The inventory of

his estate fills seven pages of the probate records, and includes sixty books, most of them separately named and valued. It amounts to five hundred and seventy-eight pounds, and at the end is written: "And we judge there is about a sufficientcy of ye necessities of life to support the family one year not inventoryed." There were only two sons, Nathan and Eliab. The former moved away but Eliab lived in Bellingham and was a deacon in the Baptist Church. His daughter Abigail lived in Worcester from 1817 to 1860, and died one hundred years ten months and three days old. There were seven persons in his family in 1790. He was town clerk in 1792, 1793 and 1796 to 1802. His uncle Joseph Wight, Jr., was town treasurer in 1753. Forty Wights were born in town by 1850.

NATHANIEL WEATHERBY

In 1717 he deeded land in Dedham to Josiah Thayer in exchange for eight acres in Dedham near Mendon. He signed the Bellingham petition, but soon disappeared, and his deed was not recorded till 1730 on the testimony of Thomas and Tabitha Sanford.

CHAPTER VI

THE TOWN CHURCH, 1719-1756

Bellingham was the last town to be incorporated in what is now Norfolk County; it was the farthest inland, King Philip's War had delayed settlement, and there were two other good reasons. The Dedham committee in 1695 reported that the soil was poor, and it has been seen that many of the settlers had come here with dread and hate of the religious tyranny of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. But their number increased, a town government became necessary, and as their land fell within the Massachusetts jurisdiction, there was nothing else for them to do but to ask the General Court for incorporation. The town of Dedham consented May 11, 1719: "This day the Inhabitants of this town in that track of land lying between Mendon and Wrentham presented a petition to this town praying that they may be set off from this town in order to a township the town have granted it provided they can unite and encorporat together with the farms adjacent and some Assistance and Inlargement from the towns of Mendon and Wrentham so as to capassatate them to manage the affairs of a town and have the approbation of the General Court." Like all the new towns before them, though a Congregational Church to be supported by law was what the Baptists and Quakers hated, yet the settlers had to make this the main point of their petition:

THE BELLINGHAM PETITION

To his Excellency Samuel Shute, Esq., Capt. General and Governor in Chief in & over his Majesties Province of ye Massachusetts Bay, in New England, & to ye Honourable Council & House of Representatives in General Court convened at Boston.

The Petition of The Inhabitance of a Tract of Land belonging to Dedham, westward of Wrentham, and ye Inhabitance of a Considerable Farm adjoining thereto and ye Inhabitance of a small Corner of Mendon adjacent Thereto (to ye number of four families) Humbly Shewethe:

That Whereas ye above Sd Inhabitance are Scituated at a Remoat Distance from ye Respective Towns where they at present belong: viz. The Inhabitance of the Town of Dedham, to ye number of three and 20 Families are about Twenty miles Distance from the Town where they belong and doe Duty, & being very Remoate from ye Public worship of God, & The Inhabitance, to the number of thirteen families of ye above Sd Farme being Six or Seven miles Distance from ye place of Public worship: & ye Inhabitance of Mendon afore Sd being about four miles Distance: and Considering our Remoateness & ye Inconveniencys we Labour under by Reason of the same: and that ye uniting and Incorporating of ye above Sd Tracts together & making of Them a Town may put us in a way in Some Convenient Time to obtain ye Settlement of ye Gospel among us &c (the uniting of ye Above Sd Tracts of Land Together will make a Town of aboute seven Miles Long & three miles & a half wide) and Further Considering that ye Inhabitance of ye above Sd Tract of Dedham Land & the Farme are already Incorporated into a Training Companie and that they have little or No Benefit of ye Town Priviledges or having No benefit of ye Schools we do Respectively Pay to.

The whole Number of Families belonging to ye above Sd tracte being forty & lands enough already Laid out to accommodate 20 or 30 more: The Inhabittance of Dedham Land being voated off by ye Town for that end.

Our Prayer Therefore is that your Honours would Graciously plesse to consider our Diffeculty Circumstances and grant us our petition, which is That ye above Mentioned Tracts of Land (as by one Platt hereto affixed & Described) may be incorporated together & made a Town & Invested with Town Priveliges. That we may be Inabled in Convenient Time to obtain ye Gospel & public worship of God settled, & our Inconveniences by Reason of our Remoatness be Removed: granting us such Time of Dispencc from Public Taxes as in wisdom you shall think Convenient, & in your so doing you will greatly oblige us who am your Humble petitioners: and for your Honours, as in Conscience we are Bound, Shall forever pray.

Dated ye 17th Day of November 1719

Richard Blood
Tho. Burch
Nicholas Cook
Nicholas Cook Jr
Seth Cook
Daniel Corbet
Cornelius Darling
John Darling
Samll. Darling

Zuriel Hall
Jonathan Hayward
Oliver Hayward
Samll. Hayward
William Hayward
Joseph Holbrook
John Marsh
Samll. Rich
James Smith
Pelatiah Smith

Samll. Smith
Ebenezer Thompson
John Thompson
John Thompson Jr
Joseph Thompson
Samll. Thompson
Ebenezer Thayer
Isaac Thayer
Nathaniel Weatherby

The Inhabittance of Mendon

Eliphalet Holbrook, John Holbrook, Peter Holbrook, John Corbet.

Thus the heads of thirty-two of the forty families signed this petition; perhaps it seems strange that only eight refused. Of course these eight received no consideration in the reply, which as usual contained only

one condition, that the new town itself should practically become an "orthodox church."

ANSWER

Ordered that the Prayer of the Petitioners be Granted & That a Township be Erected & Constituted according thereunto & the Platt above: Provided They Procure and Settle a Learned orthodox Minister within the Space of three years now coming.

And That John Darling, John Thompson & John Marsh be Impowered to call a Town Meeting any time in March next to choose Town Officers & manage ye other prudentiall affairs of ye Town. The name of the Town to be called Bellingham.

So the town was formed for the sake of the church, and the main story of the town is the story of the church for over forty years. The first town meeting was held to choose officers, and at the second in 1720 a committee was chosen to build the meeting house.

When it was finished in May, 1722, a committee was chosen to get preaching, and the next year Rev. Thomas Smith, 1702-1795, was asked to settle here. with a salary of sixty pounds and eighty pounds paid as a settlement. He was born in Boston, graduated at Harvard at eighteen years of age, and was licensed to preach at twenty. His diary has been printed and it says: "1723 Jan 6 I preached at Bellingham. Jan 7 The committee of Bellingham was with me to acquaint me of their call. Mar 21 I gave Bellingham an answer." He declined the invitation on account of his youth and inexperience, but continued to preach in different places till he found a chance to start a new church in Portland, Maine, where he was ordained after four years' preaching

in 1727. He was the pastor there for sixty years, taking his turn in preaching with an assistant during the last twenty of them, and his church grew into three or four others.

The Bellingham men kept on trying to get a preacher and in 1724 it was voted that "Oliver Hayward have Eleven Pounds and 17 shillings for keeping Ministers and their horses." In 1725 Mr. Robert Sturgeon supplied the pulpit, and he agreed to settle here, but was later willingly released. He is both the author and the subject of a quaint pamphlet published in 1725: "A Trespass Offering humbly presented unto the churches of New England by Robert Sturgeon." "With a true sense of my sins I now acknowledge them . . . I bewail my disorders, for which a council of churches has rebuked me: receiving a private and very irregular ordination, and joining a party in Watertown who cast contempt on the General Court, and I helped publish a pamphlet slandering the churches and Dr. Mather, and this party sent a remonstrance to the King." "Boston Apr 17 1725. A council called this day considers that he has offered such satisfaction as may be required. Cotton Mather, Moderator."

The town of Watertown grew very fast in the earliest years of the colony, and soon had two churches. A committee of the General Court advised the town to move both the meeting houses farther apart within a definite time to accommodate the enlarging settlement better, and the town voted to do it. Most of those who supported the second church there objected to the removal of their building, which had stood there for twenty-five years, and in January, 1722, sixty-three citizens agreed to pay Mr. Sturgeon eighty-four pounds a year to preach to them there. They were warned by the Selectmen against him, a stranger from Ireland who had come to

town only a month before from Woburn. They persisted in defying the Selectmen, the vote of the town and the committee of the General Court, till Mr. Sturgeon was fined in court for preaching as a "pastor of a pretended church and disturbing this and other towns." After this interesting experience Bellingham voted his installation here for October, 1725, but in March the town agreed with the church in dismissing him, with pay for his firewood, which they had promised, and twenty-six shillings to Oliver Hayward for boarding him.

In November, 1726, Rev. Jonathan Mills, 1703-1773, was called and he accepted. He was born in Braintree, graduated at Harvard at twenty years of age, and preached here for twelve years, the only settled Congregational minister the town ever had. The salary offered him was seventy-five pounds and four voluntary contributions a year, besides a first settlement of eighty pounds, with a salary increase of ten pounds when ten more families came, and twenty pounds for twenty new families.

The next year Dr. Corbet in his will left the church five pounds to buy vessels for the Lord's Supper, and the year after that the town voted that Mr. Mills shall have the west pew for his family's use, and that he may cut a place for a casement in said pew. So after seven years' efforts the town seemed happy with its settled minister, but the satisfaction did not last long.

Forty-eight families were taxed in 1726 when he came, but that was the whole strength of the town. January 24, 1727, Jacob Bartlett, David Cook, Josiah Cook and Joseph Scott in jail in Boston petitioned the General Court for release "because their consciences do not allow them to pay the town tax for the support of the minister." They were released to appear in court the next May, but no further record of the case can be found.

In 1728 a law was passed that Anabaptists and Quakers should not be taxed to support the town churches, provided they attend their own church and live within five miles of it. In 1734 five men were named in the town records under this law: "Quakers exempt from ministerial taxes and meeting houses and their names is as follows." Many other such lists are given. The minister's salary was hard to raise, and the town petitioned the General Court for help towards it. But in 1732 they voted not to pay Mr. Mills' back salary. The next year it was voted to give Mr. Mills "the money due the town from the man that was cared to prison by Francis Inman, if he can get it." This generous offer was followed a week later by a different vote, to ask the General Court to pay Mr. Mills what is due him. In 1734 the town refused to add five pounds to his salary of seventy-five pounds. Even if there were ten new families in town, which is probable, it appears that only twenty-eight families actually paid towards his support this year, and the Quakers and Baptists happened to be just the ones who generally had the largest estates. There must have been much hard feeling now, for a committee of three was chosen "to regulate the disturbances in the town among us."

In 1735 it was voted that he should have eighty pounds, but when this dispute was ended, it was followed by another one as bad, over ruling elders. These officers are mentioned in the Bible as chosen by a local church to have authority over it, and they are the characteristic feature of the Presbyterian Church to this day. They have no duties that cannot be performed by the minister, deacons or united members of the church as well, and their authority sometimes became a source of dispute and trouble. The churches here never all agreed to choose

them, and the office was called obsolete even in 1680. Still the nearest Congregational Church to this one, at West Medway, chose elders from 1753 to 1768. Mr. Mills opposed them as not required by Scripture and as an interference with his authority. His church chose them against his will and called a council of churches to confirm their action, while he and his friends called another, to meet on the same day. After several unsuccessful attempts to unite the two councils, they made separate reports, one in favor of Mr. Mills, the other that the church rescind its action and try to persuade him to join them in choosing elders, but if he again refused to disregard him again. Thus no agreement came, each party was confirmed in its position, and in 1738 the town and church united in calling a council to dismiss Mr. Mills. This council gave the advice which was desired, but it was very small. He denied its authority over him and continued to preach. The town chose a committee to get another minister, and "to prevent any disorders in the meeting house on the Sabbath Day." Four men protested against this vote, and declared that only seven men voted for it. He then preached in his own house. Finally the majority of the church voted him out of their membership, and he moved away to Boston.

In 1739 Mr. Mills sold his homestead with fifty acres reserved for the first town minister for six hundred and seventy-five pounds, no small sum for that time; and the same property was sold for seven hundred pounds the next year.

In 1738 John Metcalf, the first of that family at Caryville, brought this letter from the Dedham church: "To the Chh of Christ in Bellingham the first Chh of Ct in Dedham wisheth Grace Mercy and Peace from God

the Father, & from our Lord Jesus Christ — Brethren —

The Glorious God who Appointeth ye Bounds of all our Habitations, having disposed of our Beloved Brother John Metcalf Jr among yourselves — We do upon His Desire, & pursuant to our Ecclesiastical Constitution, & the Laudable Custom of these Chhs, in order to His Incorporating with yourselves, recommend him to your holy Fellowship Care & Watch, as One who was received into full Communion with Us, & according to a judgement of Charity behaved as became ye Gospel while with Us, praying you to Receive Him in ye Ld as becometh Saints.

We Commend our Dear Brother to God, & the Word of his Grace, who is able to build Him up, & to give Him an Inheritance among them that are Sanctified . . . We Commend our Sister Ch in Bellingham to ye Pastoral Care & Conduct of the Great Shepherd & Bishop of Souls, who leadeth Joseph as a Flock . . . and so Asking a Remembrance in your prayers We Subscribe

Your Brethren in ye Faith and Fellowship of ye Gospell.

Saml Dexter Pastor In ye Name & with the Concurrence of ye Fraternity Dedham Sep 11 1738."

Two years before Mr. Mills was sent away, some of the leading men of Bellingham had joined another church thirty miles away. The Baptist Church of Swansea has these records: "This is to certfie that the following persons were baptized upon profession of their faith, viz William Hayward Nicholas Cook John Thompson Eleazer Hayward Samuell Hayward Ebenezer Hayward Joseph Partridge, all inhabitants of Bellingham. The last of these persons was baptized Septm 21 1736 and all the others some time before, and have had the advice of the old church in Swansea, to assemble together on

the Lord's Day and do come Down to Swansey as often as they can attend it to communicate with the church, and as often as they can procure a minister to preach to them, they are careful to do it. Attested by me Samuel Maxwell Minister Jonathan Kingsley Deacon Swansea Jan 13 1736-7."

"Oct 6 1737 Att a church meeting of the old church in Swansey the Desire of the Brethren Dwelling in Bellingham to form themselves into a Church State was communicated to the Church by their Elder which motion of theirs was approved of: Witness my hand Samuel Maxwell."

When this "Desire of the Brethren Dwelling in Bellingham" was realized a month later, there was no hope left for the town church. In 1739 a Mr. Hunt was offered a salary of one hundred pounds, but he declined it. Occasional preaching was obtained, but no minister was settled. "June 24 1743 We the antepedobaptist Church in Bellingham upon the Desier of the pedobaptist Church in the same Town concerning your settelling a minister you say you are not able to maintain a minister yourselves without wee will Come in and Joine with you. Wee are willing to joine with you so far that is by subscription." On Mr. Mills' complaint, in 1743, the town was fined for this neglect. For three or four years beginning in 1739 the town voted repeatedly on the question of moving the meeting house to the north side of Charles River, probably to secure its use by the Baptists, but without effect.

Both the church and its building grew feeble together. "1747 Put to vote whether Walsingham Chilson be employed in mending the Glass windows of the meeting house naling Bords over the glass as much as he shall think is needful. Passed." Finally in 1747 the town

petitioned the General Court to be freed from the duties of a religious parish "on account of the great & uncommon difficulties attending their religious affairs & especially the support of the ministry by reason of the many Sectaries among them and small number & poverty of the remainder." The northeast part of the town was included in the West Parish of Medway, incorporated the next year, and this petition was now granted. All support of worship in Bellingham since this time has been voluntary.

The inhabitants of Bellingham who petitioned the General Court in January, 1747, to be set off to other precincts in ecclesiastical affairs were these:

*To Mendon
I Precinct*
Thomas Baxter
Samuel Darling
Seth Hall
John Holbrook
Peter Holbrook
Caleb Phillips
Ebenezer Thomson
John Thomson

*To Mendon
II Precinct*
John Corbet
Benjamin Partridge
Ebenezer Thayer

*To Medway,
West Parish*
Obadiah Adams jr
Enoch Hill
Joseph Holbrook jr
John Metcalf
Daniel Penniman
Robert Smith

*To Wrentham, West Precinct
(Franklin)*

Joseph Blood
Joseph Chilson
Walsingham Chilson
Elizabeth Hayward, widow
Asahel Holbrook
Joseph Holbrook
John Jones
Caleb Phillips jr
Cornelius Thayer
Isaac Thayer

"Mar 2 1747 In Council. Ordered that these persons be annexed as desired."

The petition for the new West Parish in Medway was in part as follows:

“Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England.

“To His Excellency William Shirley Esq Captain General and Governor &c The Hon. Council and House of Representatives in General Court Assembled at Boston Feb 28 1747-8.

“The Petition of the Subscribers a Committee in behalf of themselves & the others whose Names are afterwritten to the Number of Forty nine all inhabitants of the Adjoining Towns of Medway Holliston Bellingham & the westerly precinct of Wrentham.

“Humbly Showeth That Your Petitioners have for a long time conflicted with great hardships and difficulties in attending on the Public Worship of God by reason of the extraordinary Distances our habitations are from the meeting houses in our respective Towns and precinct: That it is almost impossible for us with our large Families . . . that we are able by the Blessing of heaven to settle and support the Gospel among ourselves; . . . That we have applied to the Towns and precinct to which we respectively belong to be made a Distinct Precinct by Ourselves unsuccessfully except in Bellingham, That Town having petitioned the General Court that the Inhabitants might be annexed to the Towns they severally congregate with, and an Act was passed for this purpose; That the Inhabitants of the West precinct of Wrentham are an able people . . . of about 100 families, and we ask for only 9; That the Inhabitants of Holliston are about 90 families; That the Inhabitants of Medway are good livers and more families than any of the other towns have. The Bounds to contain 49 families; in Medway 31, in Bellingham 10, in Wrentham 9, in Holliston 9. The center of which is 5 miles from any meeting, and very few families above 2 miles from ours proposed.”

Signed by a committee of four and forty-five others.

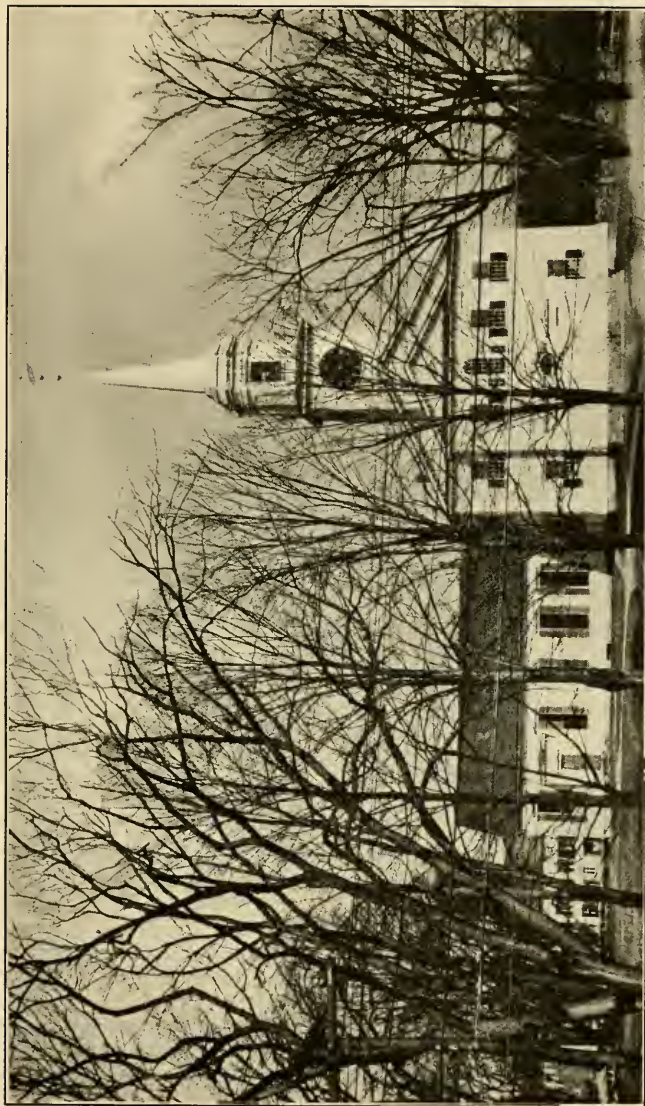
A few months later Samuel Darling, Caleb Phillips, Jr., and John Corbet with Benjamin Partridge and Hugh Boyd petitioned the General Court that the new precinct should not be granted, hoping for a minister of their own. "We are in hope that in time we shall be able to settle and support a minister in our said Town by reason yt we have Considerable of Land which is not Improved which is likely to be settled in a little time by our Children or others Coming and settling among us." But in view of the town church's hard struggle for life for nearly thirty years, the cheerful confidence of these men was not shared by the General Court; the new West Parish of Medway was incorporated, and the town of Bellingham was no longer obliged to support a church of its own.

The West Parish Church was actually organized in 1750 with thirty-four male members, and our town has had a share in its history ever since. Its first pastor came in 1752, Rev. David Thurston, a graduate of Princeton College, who remained nearly seventeen years. On account of poor health and some disagreement in regard to revivals he then resigned and bought a farm. Seventy-nine persons joined the church in his time. His successor was Rev. David Sanford, a graduate of Yale. After beginning to study theology he gave it up and settled down as a farmer, but as a result of a quarrel with his brother-in-law, a minister who showed a truly Christian spirit under Mr. Sanford's aggravations, he began his studies again and became a preacher. He served the West Parish from 1773 to 1807. When some of the church members disliked certain of his theological views and began to neglect church attendance, they received a vote of censure, and then asked to have the censure removed in order to request letters of dismissal to another

church. When this was refused, they applied to the First Church of Medway, now at Millis, for admission there, and were accepted. For this unfriendly act the Second Church refused fellowship with the First, and they remained estranged for thirty-two years. After the death of the persons concerned, Mr. Sanford saw the division healed. He was an army chaplain in the Revolutionary War, a leader in public affairs in the exciting years that followed it, a man of fine appearance with sharp eyes and a strong, clear voice and eminent as a preacher.

The third and most notable pastor was Jacob Ide, of Brown University. He was ordained here when the present church was built, in 1814, a young man in delicate health, but filled his position for fifty-one years. He had eight sons and three daughters, and lived to be ninety-five years old. His ninetieth birthday celebration in 1875 was a memorable occasion. Great simplicity of character and sound common sense were his characteristics. He was a leader in his profession, and trained forty-three young ministers in his own house. He edited the "Christian Magazine," and published the life and works of his father-in-law, Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin, the most eminent theologian of New England in his day.

Dr. Emmons was born in Haddam, Conn., the last of twelve children. He graduated at Yale, and was ordained at Franklin, in 1773, where he preached for fifty-four years, till he was eighty-two years old. After a sudden sickness he at once resigned his office, and though he seemed to recover all his strength, he refused to take up his work again, saying that he meant to retire while he had sense enough to do it. He lived to the age of ninety-six. He was an early leader in anti-slavery and



WEST PARISH CHURCH, BUILT IN 1814

temperance reform, and advocated foreign missions ten years before they were begun. He founded the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, and was its president for twelve years. He published seven volumes of sermons, and trained eighty-six ministers. When he made a parish call, which happened in every house about once a year, it was no small event, and all the family were summoned to hear him. Both he and Dr. Ide had an influence and an authority in all this region that can hardly be realized today, in our divided town as well as its neighbors.

Since Dr. Ide the pastors have been:

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1865-1872 | Stephen Knowlton | 1886-1889 | Augustus H. Fuller |
| 1873-1875 | S. W. Segur | 1889-1894 | William Carr |
| 1876-1885 | J. M. Bell | 1894-1898 | John F. Crosby |
| | 1899-1901 | George E. Sweet | |
| | 1902-1914 | George R. Hewitt | |
| | 1914- | Henry F. Burdon | |

The church of the West Parish was the Second Church of Medway. The Third Congregational Church, composed of disaffected members of the Second, was organized as a result of disagreement on the discipline of C. H. Deans, a lawyer, in 1886. It held its meetings in the old Parish House, now the building of the Medway Historical Society, till 1891, when the two churches united again.

The town church of Bellingham continued a feeble life without support by law till 1756, when it disbanded. Even after that sermons were preached occasionally in the old building till 1774, when it was sold at auction. One of the last preachers was Rev. Solomon Prentice, who was the first settled minister at Grafton in 1731. He invited the great preacher, Whitefield, to his pulpit, and after some disagreement, he left that church in 1747.

In 1764 a petition of the inhabitants of Bellingham, ignoring the Baptist Church there, stated that they had had no minister for twenty years, when some families had been set off to the West Parish, leaving about forty families destitute, who were unable to support a minister; and prayed that these families now be restored. The clerk of the West Parish was ordered served with a notice to reply to this petition at the next session of the court. The Parish chose a committee to make their reply, of whom Stephen Metcalf was one, and it was successful, for the petition was refused.

The following letter describes the end of the town church in Bellingham; an attempted revival of it from 1824 to 1826 will be related later in Chapter VIII.

“To Mr Caleb Phillips for the Church of Christ in Bellingham, met Dec 10 1755. Beloved Brethren it is with Grief that I am necessarily absent from you but hereby send my mind viz. That I don't think it proper to dissolve until we have disposed of the church utensils and I think it would be proper to divide them, (there now remaining but 8 male members) at least into two equal parts if not into four, and deliver my part to Brother John Holbrook and all the rest as you may agree.

“As soon as that is done I should think proper by vote to dismiss & recommend each to the neighboring churches they desire in the usual manner, and me to the ch. in the Precinct in which I live, called the 2nd Precinct in Medway.

Your unworthy brother,

JOHN METCALF MODERATOR.”

The utensils were divided January 6, 1756.

CHAPTER VII

TOWN AFFAIRS 1719-1747

THE oldest record book of the town belonged to the proprietors of the land itself, and it extends from 1714 to 1813. The clerks who kept it were Thomas Sanford for eleven years, John Marsh, three, Joseph Holbrook, twenty-two, Joseph Chilson, twenty-eight, to 1750, and others. In 1812 it was voted to sell the remaining common land and divide the proceeds.

The first of the eight volumes of records of the town's business begins with eighteen pages of such entries as these: "1724 The marks natural and artificial of a mare colt of James Smith coming three years old of a redish Roan Coller with a white face and four white feet Branded thus B-I." "1733 Taken up in Bellingham Damage feasant (doing) and strayed by Jonathan Thayer a lite bay hors Branded with figure 9 with two white feet behinde a Belt and Bell about his necke." "1742 Joseph Chilson Ear-mark for His Criters is 'a (out of the top of the left ear. ' "

Besides the lists of officers chosen, the records of meetings contain these votes most frequently: Settling with the town treasurer, debtors and creditors. To choose committees "to reckon with the treasurer." To instruct the assessors. "They may have 10s for making rats" (rates or taxes). To "sink" certain men's taxes. "Swine to go at large this year." Laying out roads. Perambulating the town's boundary lines. Warning people out of town who were liable to become paupers.

Notices of newcomers "in comfortable state of wealth." Anabaptists exempt from the tax for the minister. "For going after ministers."

The first town meeting was held March 2, 1720 at the house of "Ensign John Thompson." Pelatiah Smith was moderator, and was chosen town clerk, and John Holbrook treasurer. The first selectmen were "Lt. John Darlin," Pelatiah Smith, John Thompson, Nathaniel Jillson and John Corbett. They chose also constables, surveyors, tithing men, fence viewers and field drivers for the cattle. It was voted to choose officers annually on the first Wednesday in March, and a committee was chosen to consider a place for the meeting house. At another meeting in the same month a committee to build the house was chosen, and a narrow ax man was to have two shillings, six pence and a broad ax man, three shillings a day. There were five meetings this first year.

Next year the town voted to build two pounds for stray cattle, to cost forty shillings each. A meeting was held the same year to choose a "Deputy" (for the General Court) "but not judging ourselves qualified, desired to be excused." This vote was repeated for many years. The town sometimes paid the smallest state tax in the county.

1721 "It passed by a voat that ye Meeting House should be larthed and plastered with white lime there should be an alley of four feet wide through the body and between the ends of the Seats and the outside." This house, near the corner of Blackstone and South Main Streets, stood till 1774. It was the center and the dividing point of the town, for one constable notified all inhabitants south of the meeting house of the town meetings, and another those who lived north of it. 1723 Voted to give the minister a day's work a man to get his firewood. 1726 "Voted that John Holbrook be Impowered to take

care of the youth in this town to prevent them from prophaning the Sabbath."

This year forty-eight families were taxed, and just half of the men named were signers of the petition seven years before:

| Signers | | Others | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Richard Blood | Eliphalet Holbrook | Jacob Bartlett | Francis Inman |
| Thomas Burch | John " | Banfield Capron | Nathaniel Jillson |
| Nicholas Cook | Joseph " | Josiah Cook | Eleazer Partridge |
| Nicholas Cook jr | Peter " | Daniel Corbett | John Rockwood |
| John Corbett | John Marsh | Jonathan Cutler | Joseph Scott |
| Cornelius Darling | Pelatiah Smith | David Daniels | Silvanus " |
| Capt John Darling | Ebenezer Thayer | Cornelius Darling | Robert Staples |
| Samuel Darling | Isaac Thayer | David " | Samuel " |
| Zuriel Hall | Ebenezer Thompson | Ebenezer " | Thomas " |
| Jonathan Hayward | John " | Richard " | Benjamin Thompson |
| Oliver Hayward | John jr " | Henry Hill | Ebenezer " |
| William Hayward | Joseph " | Edward Hunt | Jonathan " |

In 1727 the town of Wrentham proposed to run its western boundary line a little northwest instead of north, taking away three hundred acres from our town. The line had been fixed in 1661 and had caused many disputes. In 1730 Bellingham voted to petition the General Court for aid if it lost so many inhabitants. The line was finally left running north. A part of Mendon east of Mill River proposed to join this town at this time, but for some unknown reason it was not wanted.

In 1737 is this entertaining vote: "to see what ye town will do about hogs whether they will let them run at larg or shet them up and also to see what the town will do about the rats which are in the hand of Joseph Thompson constable which he cant get. Voted that they be sunk." The clerk disposed of the "rats" but forgot the hogs.

February 6, 1739 three of the five selectmen issued the warrant for the annual town meeting, "on Wed Mar 7 at 9 A M to choose Town officers to serve the King & the

Town, and to see if the said Town will shut up their Hogs or Let them run at Large being Yoaked & Ringed as the law Directs, and make return" etc. John Metcalf, town clerk, certified that this meeting was held, and that John Corbet was chosen moderator, and John Holbrook, Samuel Darling, Daniel Corbet, Joseph Corbet and John Corbet, selectmen.

The next April a petition against this meeting went to the General Court, which declared that the said three selectmen signed the warrant without the other two, and "with 8 or 9 others entered on the business of the annual meeting without regulating it according to the good laws of this Province, as was there and then urged on them." About twenty men remonstrated and requested the selectmen to annul the elections made "through Just Resentment of the Imposition on them, the like to which we have too often borne with too much Patience on such occasions.—We do now petition you for the redress of our insufferable Grievance aforementioned, the like to which we have suffered from Time to Time by our former frequent disordered Town Meetings."

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--------------------|---|------------------|---|
| Richard Aldrich | | Jonathan Draper | | Silvanus Scott | Q |
| Jacob Bartlet | Q | Ebenezer Hayward | B | Jonathan Scott | |
| Joseph Bartlet | Q | Elezer Hayward | | James Smith | |
| Ichabod Bozworth | | Oliver Hayward | | Robert Smith | |
| Banfield Capron | | Samuel Hayward | B | Daniel Thayer | |
| John Chilson | | Thomas Higgins | | Isaac Thayer | |
| Walsingham Chilson | | Eliphalet Holbrook | B | John Thomson | B |
| Caleb Collum | | Francis Inman | | Jonathan Thomson | B |
| David Cook | B | Uriah Jillson | Q | Peter Thomson | B |
| Josiah Cook | B | Joseph Partridge | Q | Elnathan Wight | B |
| Nicholas Cook | B | Joseph Scott | B | Joseph Wightjr | B |
| Richard Darling | | | | | |

The letters B and Q designate those known to be Baptists and Quakers.

"Deposition of Robert Smith, Ebenezer Hayward and Samuel Hayward, June 4, 1739.

Being att our Meeting House in Bellingham on ye first Wednesday in March last att ye usual time of day for our Annuall Meeting and when we came thereupon or aboute, ten or eleven of the town had chosen the Chiefe Officers and we with about 18 more desired the Moderator to Resede from what they had done and begin their meeting anew or appoint another, for their assembling themselves aboute three hours sooner than ever we knew them to do on Said Day. And a grate number of the town was never warned to attend, as they then declared to the Moderator and Selectmen, which they made Lighte of and with a seeming Laftuer told us we might Do as we pleased whereupon we tolde them that we shoulde make our application whare we Doubted not but yt we shoulde be heerde and so withdrew from them."

Answer of the three selectmen and the town clerk to the petition of Oliver Hayward, Joseph Scott and others complaining of the manner of calling the town meeting and its proceedings. The three selectmen called the meeting because the other two live far remote and take no manner of care whether a warrant issues or not, so that three are accustomed to do it. "This warrant was Red in a public Town Meeting by a constable a month before March 7." It was voted in 1720 to meet the first Wednesday in March, and it has always been done since then. This meeting began an hour and a half later than the set time.

Of the petitioners only twenty-four are voters, and most of them claim exemption from ministerial taxes. "Scarce three of them have been three times to meeting in our Public Meeting house for a Twelve months Past on lords daies, Oliver Hayward in particular. That these Malecontents Will & do Invade the Rights & Privilidges of those that are qualified to vote in ministerial affairs,

witness the last year when they sunk many Pounds ministerial money regularly Granted & leveyed Taking advantage of one of themselves moderator of Town meeting and another of them Town clerk (Eliphalet Holbrook) from whom a copy of such procecedure can not be obtained tho requested with the Tender of Reasonable Fees. So that their complaints are only taking the advantage of their own Rong.”

We therefore pray you to dismiss the Petition.

“Notes. Joseph Scott one of the Two Selectmen who neglected Issuing the warrant for the March meeting & one of the above petitioners (as the other three Selectmen are credably informed) having obtained the Proclamation for the last General Fast of this Province kept & concealed it from those that meet at the usual place of Public Meeting in sd Town & from ye minister that their preached, & made games or mock at it, That he and many others of the sd Petitioners, as usual followed their Servile Labours, as before on such Daies in Derison & contempt of Athority.

John Holbrook, Samuel Darling, John Corbet, Selectmen, and John Corbet, Moderator.”

This answer was successful, for the General Court dismissed the petition in June, 1739.

The Assessors' list of qualified voters March 5, 1739, contained just fifty names.

Richard Aldrich
Joshua Andrews
Jacob Bartlet
Jacob Bartlet jr
Daniel Corbit
John Corbet
David Cook
Josiah Cook
Nicholas Cook
Banfield Capron
Ebenezer Darling

Cornelius Darling jr
John Darling
Richard Darling
Samuel Darling
Jonathan Draper
Eleazer Hayward
Oliver Hayward
Samuel Hayward
Seth Hall
Zuriel Hall
Eliphalet Holbrook

John Holbrook
Joseph Holbrook
Peter Holbrook
Thomas Higgins
Francis Inman
Nathl Jilson
Nathl Jilson jr
Uriah Jilson
Caleb Mackallum
John Metcalf
Joseph Partridge

Caleb Phillips
Caleb Phillips jr
Joseph Scott
Salvenus Scott
James Smith
Robert Smith

Ebenr Thomson
John Thomson jr
Jonathan Thomson
Joseph Thomson
Peter Thomson
Daniel Thayer

Ebenr Thayer
Isaac Thayer jr
Jonathan Thayer jr
Joseph Wight
Elnathan Wight

The object for which the town uses the most money in these days did not appear at all in the records of the first eighteen years. In 1737 it was first voted to have a free school, to be kept for six months in all at five different houses: two months with Ebenezer Hayward at North Bellingham, one with Jonathan Thompson, near Crimpville, three weeks with Joseph Scott on Scott Hill, one month with Samuel Darling near Bald Hill and the Wrentham line, and five weeks with Nathaniel Jillson in what is now Woonsocket, near Border Grange Hall. Eighty pounds was voted for the town church and forty pounds for all other expenses this year. The first school seems to have been no great success, for it was voted down the next two years, renewed in 1740, and omitted the next three years, but supported after that.

In 1739 it was voted to move the meeting house further north to some spot near Charles River within three years, provided the General Court added to Bellingham apparently that part of Mendon which had been refused in 1730.

In 1742 on May 8, thirteen Mendon men agreed to join in a petition to the General Court to be set off to Bellingham if the people of that town would move their meeting house "to the north side of Second Bridge River (Charles) upon the Knowl by the Road which Leeds from the said meeting house to the Country Road (Hartford Turnpike) by the house of John Marsh." As Bellingham had already voted to do this in 1739, and repeated the vote this year, this rather clumsy petition was drawn up

May 26 and signed by John Holbrook, Joseph Holbrook and John Corbet of Bellingham for that town, and by nine men of Mendon:

“Humbly Sheweth That since the first Incorporating of the Town of Bellingham into a Township whereby they became Liable & Obliged by the Laws of the Province to Settle & Support a Gospel Ministry as by law prescribed, A very great number of the Inhabitants being of Opinion (in matters relating to the Settlement & Support of Ministers different from the Methods prescribed in the Law & fixed by the Acts of this Hon Ble Court, from all Rates or Taxes relating to such Settlement & Support) there are now very little more than Thirty families in Said Town, on whom the charge of the Settling & maintenance of a Minister can by Law be fixed, which most be An heavy charge on So Small a Number, may it please Your Excellency & Honrs they are willing as far as Able to forward the Settlemt of the Gospel & Ordinances but Labour under great discouragements through their Weakness and Inability to go through the necessary charge thereof . . . And May It please this Honble Court Some Inhabitants of the Town of Mendon hereunto Subscribers . . . , who are situated partly on a Gore of Land lying between the northerly end of Bellingham & the easterly Precinct of Mendon and part on the westerly side of Bellingham . . . are Desirous to be Incorporated with Said Town of Bellingham, and to join with them in Settling & supporting a Learned & Orthodox Ministry.”

This petition reached the Court June 8, and the answer of Mendon came in September. First, there is no Gore, for the east precinct of Mendon, which became Milford in 1780, bounds on Bellingham, Hopkinton and Holliston. Second, “The Town of Mendon was clipd many years agoe to favour the Town of Bellingham.”

when just incorporated. Then Uxbridge was set off, then Upton, and last year the east precinct was incorporated, which has already called a minister, though no church is yet built, and no part of its strength can be spared. Third, the west precinct is the First Church of Mendon, now weakened by losing the new east precinct and by the Anabaptists and Quakers, exempt from ministerial support, who own a quarter of the property there. Fourth, the land asked for is near three thousand acres, and has about twenty-four families, many of whom are unwilling. Fifth, the change would be likely to require the removal of our meeting house, lately built. This answer was approved, and the petition was denied.

In this same year of discouragement the town voted to support no minister and no school. Next year the school was to be kept in four places and cost thirty pounds, and preaching was to receive only voluntary contributions.

About 1740 the town lost the south part of its territory, as much as paid a third of all its taxes, John Metcalf wrote forty-five years later. This was the result that had been feared for a long time. As long ago as in 1707 armed men in Mendon seized two citizens of Providence and took them to Boston as intruders who claimed "half of Mendon's land." They were released, and after much negotiation and many postponements two committees of the two colonies met at Wrentham in 1719 and spent two days in running the south line of Massachusetts. The matter seemed to be settled in the same year that our town was formed, but it was not. John Metcalf wrote that the people in the south part of our town found that their Rhode Island neighbors paid only half as much in taxes as they, and sent a petition to the Rhode Island legislature to join them to that colony. Massachusetts

declined the Rhode Island offer to accomplish this change, and so the Rhode Island men ran a line of their own. The Massachusetts authorities refused to reduce the tax levied on this town in proportion to this loss for ten years, hoping to have it finally annulled, but they did accept a proportional part of the tax each year and excused the rest. Rhode Island declared that the corner stake set up by Massachusetts in 1642 and agreed to by Connecticut and Rhode Island was over four miles too far south, and deprived Rhode Island of a strip of land of that width and twenty-two miles long. The oldest charters made Massachusetts reach three miles south of Charles River, a distance which the Rhode Island men seemed to measure from Populatic Pond instead of the southern point of the river in Bellingham. A Rhode Island map of 1750 shows the south line of Bellingham about four miles north of where it is now, and such a change as that, from its previous extent to the Blackstone River, including what is now East Woonsocket, might easily take away a third of the Bellingham taxes. This loss on the south of that line was in part only temporary, but there was another smaller loss on the east about the same time, in the town of Cumberland.

The east line of Rhode Island was run exactly north from Pawtucket Falls to the Massachusetts line in 1747 by the order of the King of England, taking away from Massachusetts, Cumberland and other towns with forty-eight hundred people. Our town had to suffer a long time from this confusion and uncertainty of boundary lines, besides its own internal weakness from the unlucky division in religious matters. Although the town is now eight miles long, a proposed petition to the General Court as late as 1773, called its length only five or six miles.

In 1744 it was voted to form seven school districts to

include the fifty families, eight to send to Samuel Hayward's house, eight to John Holbrook's, five to Isaac Thayer's, seven to Joseph Wight's, six to Jonathan Thayer's, nine to Widow Scott's, and seven to Samuel Darling's. The assessors divided the money appropriated among the districts, and this plan was followed for more than twenty-five years, though not every district had a school every year. In 1772 the fourth and fifth districts were united "for the furter." The first school house was not built till 1790.

This first chapter of the town's history ends with 1747, when the West Parish of Medway was incorporated to include the families of North Bellingham and Caryville, and there was no longer an established town church. The Baptist Church took its place so completely in men's minds that seventy-seven years later the Supreme Court of the State had to decide after a long trial that it did not actually own the town house.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BAPTIST CHURCH 1736-1819

SOME of the citizens of Rehoboth refused to support their town church as early as 1649, and in 1663 John Myles, a travelling preacher, commissioned by Cromwell and named for punishment at the Restoration of the King, came from Wales and started there the fourth Baptist Church in America. They were fined five pounds each and warned away; these men formed the new town of Swansea and the nearest Baptist Church to our town, where eight Bellingham men were baptized by 1736.

In 1737, they with seven others, not all of Bellingham, subscribed a church covenant at Mendon, and the next February, "at the house of one of them in Bellingham," they chose Nicholas Cook a deacon and "a man to keep the church book and enter church notes." These fifteen men were:

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Nicholas Cook | Eliphalet Holbrook | Jonathan Thompson |
| Benjamin Force | Joseph Partridge | Peter Thompson |
| Ebenezer Hayward | Edward Pickering | Samuel Thompson |
| Eleazer Hayward | Eleazer Taft | Elnathan Wight |
| Samuel Hayward | John Thompson | Joseph Wight |

They formed the fourth Baptist Church in Massachusetts. For several years they had no meeting house and only occasional preaching, but their ideas were spreading all the time. In 1740 there were twenty-one Baptist Churches in New England, eleven of them in Rhode Island. The first record in the Bellingham church

book appears in 1742: "The Anabaptist Church proceeded in order to chooes a man amongst us to call a church meeting and to order and to Rule as a head among us." Some one like a ruling elder would be needed where there was no settled pastor. They also chose "two Princibel men" to certify to the assessors the list of their members who would be exempt from taxes for the town church. In the same year the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Boston was present here and baptized five persons, and seven more the next year.

In 1744 one of their members, Elnathan Wight, gave the land for a church by the following deed:

"I Elnathan Wight of Bellingham in his Majesty's Province of Massachusetts Bay in New England Yeoman for Divers good Causes & Valuable Considerations, and for five Shillings paid by Jonathan Thompson, Eliphalet Holbrook and Joseph Wight all of Bellingham Yeomen, have granted unto them as Feoffees in Trust, land . . . near the road to the Second Bridge River, to the Public use, benefit and behoof of that Church or Society of Baptized Believers whereunto the said Elnathan Wight and the others do now stand related as members, for and so long a time as the said church shall hold to and walk in the faith which they now possess . . . but in case they Apostatize and decline from the said Faith and Practice or in case of Annihilation, then the said land hereby Granted to Revert and Remain to the only proper use, benefit and behoof of the next & right heir of the said Elnathan Wight . . . Feb 22 1744."

The church was built thirty by thirty-five feet, with nineteen foot posts, and the raising took place March 20, 1744. Pews were built, but the building was never fully completed as planned. It was used for fifty years by the church, and often by the town for its meetings, during

the last years of its existence. The site of this meeting house, at Crimpville, the second one built in this town, was marked with a boulder with an inscription in November, 1912, on the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of the signing of the covenant by the fifteen first members.

The little company still had years to wait for a settled minister, even after their house was built. One of their own number, Elnathan Wight, who had given the land for it, finally became their first pastor. At twenty-three years of age he had joined the new Baptist Church with his father. In 1745 he began to keep a diary, which he continued nearly ten years. This record shows that he had had thoughts of becoming a preacher long before. It was so common for uneducated men to preach in the small and poor Baptist churches of that time, that only two of their ministers were college graduates in 1755. Even with so many examples to the contrary, Mr. Wight considered a thorough education necessary, and with modest self-distrust and some discouragements, he studied more than three years with the minister of Southboro, Massachusetts. In 1749 when he wished to be licensed to preach, he was refused by the Congregational ministers who knew him, as he was a Baptist. They advised him to go to New Jersey to find ministers of his sect there, and he began that journey, but for some reason gave it up, and soon received his license from Congregational ministers after all. They gave it finally because he did not consider that his views of baptism required him not to commune with them. In this view he differed from almost all the Baptists of his time. He was a liberal man, and the idea of close communion was distasteful to him.

Even after receiving his license, for a time he feared to begin to preach, but the ordeal was passed on March 4, 1750, "with his composure and satisfaction."

“The Baptist Church Leagully Assembled together at the House of Peter Thomson in Bellingham and Put to Votes whether the Church will chooes two men to go and Discours with Mr Elnathan Wight for one month’s preaching upon Liking or Approbation. Voted that Eliphalet Holbrook and Eliezer Hayward bee the two men and the said Holbrook and Hayward went to Mr Wight and Discourt with Mr Wight and Mr Wight Consented thereto.”

The desired approbation was obtained, the church called him to be its pastor, and he accepted the call in August.

They adopted a very lengthy covenant in October, in part as follows. Some of the names signed were written long after 1750; twelve men and one woman signed then.

“The Articles of Faith and Church Discipline, which we . . . do profess, . . . are contained in a Printed Declaration put forth by the Baptist Churches in England . . . and we do agree to be Governed by the Sacred Scriptures Principally, & by said Confession Subordinately. . . .

Moreover we have concluded . . . to record the following Church Covenant:

THE CHURCH COVENANT, as foloweth,

We whose names are hereafter written, Vizt some that it hath pleased GOD through the riches of his grace to call out of Darkness into his Marvellous Light, & to Reveal his Son in us, and having shewn unto us our Duty & privilege as believers, not only to Seperate from the World but also to Congregate & Embody ourselves into a Church State, . . . & being brought in some blessed measure into Oneness of Spirit, being baptized by One Spirit into One Body, and being agreed in the Great and Sublime Truths of the Gospel, We do therefore in the

Name and fear of the Lord, Give up Ourselves unto the LORD, and to One Another by the Will of GOD, to Walk together as a Church of Christ in the fellowship of the Gospel, . . . & as the Lord shall please to help us We will frequently Assemble Ourselves together as a Church of Christ, to attend upon Our Lord in the Service of his house, especially every LORD'S Day, . . . And as We shall be under the conduct of JEHOVAH, We will keep the doors of GOD'S house or church open always to Believers in Christ, . . . And as Our God will help us, We will keep them always shut against visible Unbelievers and profligate persons, . . . And now as a testimony of our belief and of Our holy resolution in the strength of Grace, to stand and Walk together in the fellowship of the Gospel, . . . We call not only Heaven and Earth to Witness, but We also subscribe the same with Our hands . . .

Names of the Brethren

Elnathan Wight
 Eliphelet Holbrook
 Joseph Wight
 Eleazar Taft
 Jonathan Thomson
 Peter Thomson*
 Elezer Hayward
 Samuel Hayward*
 Ebenezer Hayward
 Samuel Darling: juner
 John Thomson*
 Aaron Thayer
 Silas Wheelock
 Jonathan Wheelock
 Josiah Partridge
 Isaiah Blood

Aaron Perry
 Nathan Man
 Noah Alden Elder
 Elhanan Winchester junr

Names of the Sisters

Martha Wheelock
 Abigail Blood
 Joanna Alden
 Martha Wight
 Catherine Clark
 Lucy Alden
 Hannah Haven
 Betty Bixby
 Abigail Partridge
 Abigail Holbrook
 Jemima Thomson
 Hanna Wheelock
 Ruth Alden

There were so few Baptist Churches in Massachusetts that Mr. Wight tried to get a council of Congregational churches to ordain him. Three different dates were set, and one of them was adjourned twice, but in vain. He would be glad to practice fellowship with them, but

they were unwilling. Adin Ballou says of his letter to the Milford church: "This invitation from an intelligent and exemplary Christian man, liberal for his times, was a puzzle to the church, but the ruling elders declined it." Finally he applied to his own denomination, and the Baptist Church of Brimfield and the Second of Boston sent delegates to a council at Bellingham in 1755. A memento of this memorable occasion is a printed sermon, entitled, "Ministers ambassadors for Christ. A Sermon preached at Bellingham Jan 15 1755 by Elnathan Wight, then ordained pastor of a church of Christ there. To which is added a summary confession of faith, agreed to by the church under his watch and care. Boston New England 1755." The introduction is: "In speaking to this doctrine I shall observe the following method, I. I shall endeavour to shew that the true ministers of the gospel are ambassadors for Christ. II To shew some of the necessary qualifications of these ambassadors. III That they are sent forth by Christ to perswade sinners to be reconciled to God. IV To shew what means they should use to obtain the end for which they are sent, which is to gain souls to Christ, or to perswade sinners to be reconciled to God. V and lastly endeavour some suitable improvement (application) upon the whole."

The church grew slowly but steadily. More than three of its attendants were arrested for not supporting their parish churches. In 1753 Eleazer Adams of Medway, sixty-six years old, who had come regularly to the Bellingham church for years, was imprisoned in Boston. John Jones and Jesse Holbrook of Bellingham, who had been assigned to the west precinct of Wrentham (Franklin now), but had not attended there for two years, were summoned by the Wrentham collector. On April 23 he started to take them to the "common goald," and they

were on the road "near 24 hours." Sometimes he rode ahead of them, sometimes behind. When they had not seen him for an hour, they supposed themselves free, and returned home. But he appeared again with the same demand for the tax, they absolutely refused to pay it, and that is the end of the story as told in a letter signed by two of the Bellingham Baptists of May 4, 1753.

Many protests at such treatment were made in many towns, and at a general meeting of Baptists in Bellingham an agent was chosen to go to England to appeal to the King, and one hundred pounds subscribed for the purpose. The Revolution was approaching, and he never went, but the proposed memorial was presented to the General Court here instead. It was endorsed, "Read and as it contains indecent reflections on the Laws and Legislature, it is dismissed." Their agent appealed again, disclaiming any intent of improper criticism, and the case was again dismissed.

In 1757 vessels for the Lord's Supper were bought for the Bellingham church with a small legacy from Peter Thompson.

A history of the early Baptist churches calls Mr. Wight "a pious and useful man." His salary was forty or fifty pounds a year, but he was comfortably off without it. He filled his office faithfully till his early death in 1761. His people afterwards practised close communion like regular Baptists. Mr. Wight married in 1754 the widow Abigail Blood, and had one daughter and two sons, Nathan and Eliab. His widow married Nathan Mann of Franklin, who brought them up. Nathan went to New York State, but Eliab remained on the homestead, and became a deacon in his father's church.

Several persons in town have some of Mr. Wight's original sermons. They are neatly written and very

logical and systematic in form. The inventory of his estate, amounting to fifty-seven pounds, mentions about sixty books, including a Greek Testament and a Latin Bible. The gravestone of our first Baptist minister and his wife is in the North Bellingham cemetery, and has this inscription:

While you are standing here to read
Prepare for Death with care & speed
For sure it is that you must die
And hasten to Eternity.
Prepare for Death he often said
Who in this silent Grave is laid.

Elnathan Wight

1715 — 1761

For five years after Mr. Wight's death the church had no pastor.

"Oct 28 1762 the Baptist Church in Bellingham Regularly met together and voted to send Ebenezer Holbrook up to the Jersey to see if said Holbrook can git a minister to be with us to Preach the Gospel with us in Bellingham." Mr. James Mellen was called, but he declined, and the second pastor was Noah Alden, the great grandson of John Alden, the Pilgrim of Plymouth. The Pilgrim's grandson, John of Middleboro, had thirteen children, of whom Noah was the youngest. John's will in 1730 disposed of a large estate of twenty-eight hundred and ninety-three pounds, and it says: "And my will is that my son Noah be brought up in learning at the college." The little boy was then five years old, and his mother died only two years later. His father's liberal plan was not realized, for with both parents gone the property disappeared too, and he could not go to college.

He was fond of study, and said he would rather have the expected education than his father's house full of silver and gold, but he had to leave school and live with a brother-in-law and then with other relatives. When fourteen years old he chose a guardian with whom he lived two years, but thinking himself abused, he left him and shifted for himself.

As young as eighteen years old he thought of becoming a preacher, but he gave it up, for his lack of education and of friends to advise him, and he married at twenty. Both he and his wife joined the Congregational Church at Middleboro. At twenty-four he moved to Stafford, Connecticut, and bought a farm, and four years later he became a Baptist. His quickened interest in religion revived his feeling that it was his duty to preach, and he was ordained there in 1755 at thirty years of age, where he preached for ten years, till the people were unable to support him. After a stay at another small town, he came to Bellingham in 1766, where he ended his days. The church promised such support as they could give, but no definite amount. The Congregational party in town probably had some hope of their own revival, as their petition in 1764 suggests, and were rather jealous of the Baptists. They are said to have begun a violent opposition to Mr. Alden at first, but he overcame it entirely, and became highly respected as the first citizen of the town in public affairs.

In 1767 an association of Baptist churches in New England was formed, but they were so afraid of the tyranny of authority that only four churches joined it, of which this was one. The others were at Haverhill, Middleborough and Warren, Rhode Island. Each one was a center for a considerable region, and the pastors at Middleborough and Bellingham were their leaders in a

long struggle for religious freedom. Benedict's "History of the Baptists" says: "Bellingham was for many years the favorite resort of the few Baptist ministers in the country." The members of a Baptist church in Boston were not taxed to support any other, and the people of the other towns wanted the same right.

"Mar 24 1774 Voted First we do believe the apostels did not alow the Sisters To examine or ask questions publicly in the church of those that are come to joyn the Church Neither to be called upon by the Church to know whether they Are Satisfied with them that are received by the Church Seconly We believe that Elder Noah Alden holding that gospel invitashions were not to be aplyed to sinners in the carrier of sinners as such is agreeable to the form of sound words and not corrupt as has Ben alidged."

In 1773 Elhanan Winchester 1751-1787 joined the Bellingham Church. He was the son of a farmer of Brookline, the oldest of fifteen children, a youthful prodigy at books. He married at nineteen and joined the Congregational Church, but soon after he was immersed and joined a "New Light" Baptist Church at Canterbury, Connecticut. The next spring he began to preach with great success, and started a church of that belief at Rehoboth, with about seventy members. Within a year he changed his view to close communion, and his own church excluded him. Then he came to Mr. Alden and joined this church. A council met to ordain him, but they were not satisfied in regard to his theological views, and refused to do it. He met with success as a traveling preacher, however, and was settled for some time in South Carolina. Later, while settled in Philadelphia, he became a Universalist, and no preacher of that denomination ever had a greater reputation. He preached in England six

years, and even in France, and ended his life in Hartford, Connecticut. One library has about thirty sermons and other books of his.

The next year after Mr. Winchester, another famous preacher joined this church, John Leland, 1754-1841. He was born at Grafton of Congregational parents, and had only a common school education. When he was twenty-one years old his father's house contained only three books, the Bible, "Pilgrim's Progress," and Doddridge's "Religion in the Soul." He was baptized with seven others at Northbridge by Mr. Alden. One day he was present at a meeting where the expected preacher did not appear, and he found himself talking freely for a half hour. He then began to preach where he was invited. Within a year after joining the Bellingham church he was licensed to preach, and served poor churches in Virginia and neighboring states, which could not support a settled pastor. He traveled as far north as Philadelphia, and in 1788 he baptized three hundred persons.

When the new constitution for the United States was to be voted on, he was the candidate of those opposed to it in his county in Virginia, and his opponent was the future President Madison. Madison explained the case to him so satisfactorily that he announced publicly that he should vote himself for Madison at that election. The decision was very uncertain, and if Virginia had voted No, the constitution would have been lost, and the new nation would have been in great peril at the very start. A eulogist of Madison wrote that a Baptist minister named Leland deserved the credit of saving the constitution.

Mr. Leland baptized seven hundred persons in Virginia, and in 1791 he returned to Massachusetts to live. Like many of the Baptist preachers who opposed the State Church of Massachusetts, he was a Democrat in

politics, and in 1801 he carried a cheese of one thousand four hundred fifty pounds, made of one day's milk in his town of Cheshire, Massachusetts, to President Jefferson "as a peppercorn of their esteem" for the new President, and he preached along the journey both ways.

Most Baptist churches were too small and poor to own buildings, and their preachers had to use school-houses, taverns, and dwelling houses. A Congregationalist once declared to a Baptist that John Leland could not preach so well unless he committed his sermons to memory beforehand, and offered him the use of a Congregational building if he would use a text given him on the spot. The offer was accepted, and when he read the text aloud in the pulpit it was: "And Balaam saddled his ass." He remarked that it could hardly have been more appropriate: Balaam the unrighteous prophet represented the oppressive Congregational Church, the ass the patient endurers of its oppression, the Baptists, and the saddle the unjust exaction of taxes from the oppressed denominations. The sermon was a great Baptist success.

The Governor of Massachusetts visited Mr. Leland when he was eighty-five years old and his wife eighty-three, and they lived happily by themselves. All their thirteen children had other homes, and there had not yet been a death in the family. He was a man of tall, commanding figure, with many eccentricities, widely known for his shrewdness and his great interest in politics. He outgrew his inclination for doctrinal controversy after his early years of preaching, but he liked to tell how when the town minister came to his house to baptize him in his early childhood, he ran away, fell down, and got a bloody nose, but the hired girl caught him, and he had to submit. He remarked that little saints generally offered all the resistance in their power to this Congregational sacrament.

In 1782 the Bellingham church bought a ten-acre wood lot for the use of the minister with money given partly by legacies of Eleazer Hayward and Brother Hill of Sherborn.

In 1785 the church was joined by Aaron Leland, 1761 to 1833, in a time of revival, and he was soon after licensed to preach. He was called to serve a few people at Chester, Vermont, and after a short visit there, he returned to Bellingham to be ordained, and then settled in his new home. With nine other persons he formed the Baptist Church there in 1789, which grew fast, especially in a revival in 1799. In 1803 four other churches were set off from this one, reducing its members from two hundred and fifty-three to seventy-nine, and he started others in the territory near by. He had only a common-school education, and always worked without a fixed salary. Besides preaching, he served in the legislature, as speaker, councillor, and lieutenant-governor, for twenty-one years in all; in 1828 he declined a nomination for governor, not considering the office compatible with his profession as a preacher. He was a Jeffersonian Democrat.

Mr. Alden's labors reached beyond his own church and town. He preached abundantly to vacant congregations, and where neighborhoods invited him. He was a member of the Massachusetts convention to form the Constitution, and was the leader of the friends of religious liberty in that body. He was also one of the convention to ratify the new Constitution of the United States. He preached till late in 1796, even after a stroke of paralysis, and died the next year. He was a short man, and grew fat in later life. He was friendly and sociable with every one in town. His family contained eleven children, but some of them died young.

The hard times after the Revolution caused great dis-

tress, and something new appeared in country towns like this, namely beggars. The story is told that Mr. Alden met a "shack" one day, and gave him only a penny. When he threw it on the ground in anger, the minister showed him a silver dollar which he had been ready to give, but he did not then add it to the penny.

Noah Alden

1725 — 1797

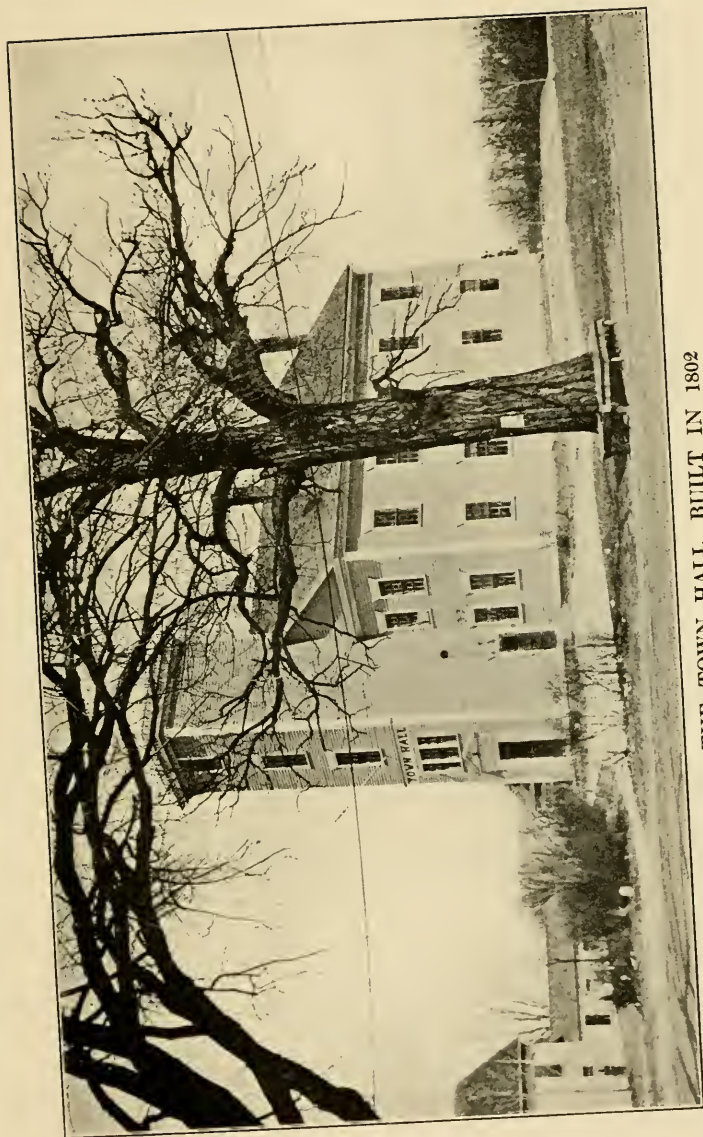
Though the church always had some members in other towns, its whole number was never large. The greatest membership at one time was fifty-eight, about 1783. Ninety-three persons had been baptized by 1797, sixty-seven of them by Mr. Alden. His salary was usually thirty pounds or thirty-six pounds a year.

After his death the pulpit was supplied by Mr. Moffit, and then by Valentine W. Rathbun. When he had served six months, the male members were just equally divided in regard to him. Two or three councils were called, but they were unable to unite the people. He accepted a call to Bridgewater, and his opponents kept up independent religious services for a while in private houses. His supporters never acted as a church after his departure, but the Baptist Society provided occasional preaching in the old church. In this town as in others, the Baptist Religious Society was joined by those who were willing to support Baptist worship, whether members of that church or not. Sometimes Congregationalists belonged to it to protest against the state-supported church, and here when that church came to an end, many wished to maintain Baptist preaching in the town rather than none. The Baptist Society

therefore was much larger than the church. With about forty-eight members the church seemed to die out in 1799.

One reason for this decline was the uncertain relation between the church and the town. In 1797 the town was asked to repair the Baptist meeting house, which it had used regularly for town meetings, but it voted not to do it and not to build another. Yet the next year it voted to call Mr. Rathbun for one year, to be supported by voluntary contributions. In 1799 a town committee on building a new meeting house reported, "It would be inexpedient to build a house for public worship," but as they "are not possessed of any building answerable to their dignity and suitable to assemble in from time to time, having for so many years used a house for public occasions barely by permission, we are therefore unanimously of opinion that it is the duty of the Town in support of their dignity and for their own accommodation and benefit to erect a building suitable to transact the public concerns in. A house which these circumstances will both admit and require will cost \$1000." The site of the present town hall was recommended, and the Baptist Society might be allowed to assist in the work, but not to increase the town's investment beyond \$1000.

At the annual town meeting of 1800 Laban Bates, Elisha Burr, John Chilson, Samuel Darling, Jr., Joseph Fairbanks, Seth Holbrook, Simeon Holbrook, Stephen Metcalf, Jr., John Scammell and Eliab Wight agreed to build such a town house forty-five by fifty feet, with twenty-five foot posts and a porch fourteen feet square, if the town would pay them \$500 in April, 1801, and \$500 in April, 1802, and grant them the right to sell pews in it for the use of the Religious Society, meaning the Baptist Society. These men were mostly Baptists, but probably



THE TOWN HALL, BUILT IN 1802

not all. Eliab Wight advised Mr. Jones not to give the proposed land, because the majority might some time favor a different sect, but others of them were ready to build first and then vote the town's money for any preaching which the majority desired. Mr. Wight is also quoted as saying at this time: "We can have such preaching as we like; the house don't belong to any society; it belongs to the town." In September, 1802, the town voted to ask Dr. Thomas Baldwin, 1753-1825, of Boston to preach the dedication sermon, and to state to him that the building was not intended for use by only one denomination, as the sermon itself showed. He had been a travelling Baptist preacher in New Hampshire till 1790, when he came to Boston, where he became the leader of his denomination in the country. He edited the American Baptist Magazine till his death, and published many sermons and religious books. His dedication sermon here was printed and it contains the words: "These doors shall be cheerfully opened to the faithful ministers of the gospel of different denominations."

The ten builders paid the expenses of the dedication and proceeded to sell the pews at auction. They were all bought by Baptists, though any one else had a right to bid. The building was accepted by the town in December, 1802.

It was voted to procure Baptist preaching, and that any inhabitant who is a pew owner may invite a minister of good character to preach there, with the consent of the selectmen or the town's supply committee at the time, and that the selectmen should keep the key. The next year thirty men voted to raise \$200 for preaching for one year and eighteen were opposed, but at the next meeting this vote was rescinded by thirty-six votes to twenty-four.

Nathaniel Kendrick, 1777-1848, preached here about this time for nearly two years. He began to teach school and attend an academy at twenty years of age. He studied the question of baptism nine months before he decided to be immersed, in 1798. He then studied theology with several ministers, one of them Dr. Emmons of Franklin. He was licensed to preach at twenty-six, and began his work here. He received \$4 and then \$5 a week, and was invited to settle here at a salary of \$260. He served several other small churches in New York State and Vermont. His mind worked slowly and his sermons were long and heavy, very strict in doctrine. He said that Dr. Emmons told him that a man who preached less than half an hour had better not have gone into the pulpit at all, and he who preached more than an hour had better never come out of it. In 1822 he became a professor of theology at Colgate University, Hamilton, New York, where he spent the rest of his life. He declined the presidency of it, saying that the only reason for his choice must have been that mentioned for Saul, because he was six feet three inches tall.

In 1805 the town voted to collect \$100 for preaching and in 1806 \$300, and to admit an organ, and to ask Mr. William Gammel, 1786-1827, to remain as preacher. He was born in Boston, and baptized in the First Baptist Church there in 1805. He studied with Mr. Williams of Wrentham, and so naturally supplied the pulpit here for about two years, but some persons disliked him greatly and in 1807 the town voted his dismissal when his time was up. He was ordained here in 1809 and went to Medfield, where he preached till 1823, when he went to Newport. He was a trustee of Brown University, and his son became a prominent professor there.

After Mr. Gammel's time there was no regular

preacher for a few years, but in 1811 the Baptist Society was incorporated by the Legislature with seventy-seven members, and the church was reorganized the next year by a council. It started now with twenty-four members. They recalled their former pastor Mr. Rathbun, who had spent twelve years successfully at Bridgewater, where ninety-six persons had joined his church. But his work here was destined to be short; he met with a fatal accident within a year. He was a modest and peaceful man, who kept his self-control in very trying times.

After a year's interval Stephen S. Nelson, 1772-1853, was the next pastor in 1814 for one year. His first settlement was at Hartford, Connecticut, where he was the only educated Baptist minister in the state, and a leader for religious liberty. It was 1818 before all sects became alike before the law there. From 1801 to 1804 he was principal of an academy at Sing Sing, N. Y. When it declined on account of the war with England, he came to Attleboro, a revival sprang up, and over one hundred and fifty persons joined his church. He then preached in Bellingham and other towns a few years, but moved to Amherst for the education of his children, and preached there to small churches as he found opportunity. Eleven persons were baptized by him here, there was unusual religious interest, and he was urged to stay, but refused.

In 1816 Rev. Abial Fisher came to this church, who led in the long legal contest for the town house, and built the present Baptist meeting house. He was born in Putney, Vt., in 1787, and graduated at Burlington University at the age of twenty-five. He studied theology under Nathaniel Kendrick, who had preached in Bellingham in 1808, and this was his first church. His stormy pastorate of thirteen years falls mainly in the town's second century, and is related in Chapter XI.

CHAPTER IX

TOWN AFFAIRS, 1747-1819

IN 1747 school was to be kept for ten pounds at only "three housen."

In 1754 of two thousand seven hundred thirty-five slaves in Massachusetts, Bellingham had only two, one man and one woman, both of whom belonged to Dr. Corbett.

A military order of this year is as follows: "To Obadiah Adams Corl. these are to Require you Forthwith to warn all ye training Compain South of ye old Meeting House under my Command to meet at ye new meeting House in Bellingham on ye Six day of november next at eight of ye Clock in ye morning completely provided with arms as ye Law Directs.

"And make Return of your warrant with your doing hereon unto myself at or before ye time of meeting. Dated at Bellingham aforesd october ye 26 1754.

"EBENEZER THAYER, *Captain.*"

In the same year our neighbors on the north suffered from a strange sickness, of which no careful description or explanation has been found. In Medway between January 9 and February 9, 1754, nineteen persons died, and in the little town of Holliston between December 18 and January 30 there were fifty-three deaths. The distress was so great that the General Court voted twenty-six pounds, thirteen shillings, four pence to the Selectmen

“for the use and relief of such poor Indigent persons as may most Need the Same.” There were no deaths in Bellingham at this time.

In 1755 it was voted not to assess those men that went first into his Majesty’s service this year, but to assess those who went last. “N B further voted to stand by the assessors in assessing those who went last.”

In 1756 the General Court received a petition from this town praying to be freed from its fine for not sending a representative, (which it had never done yet) by reason of its small number of inhabitants “by so many of their men going on the expedition to Crown Point.” It was granted ten pounds to pay the fine. Elnathan Wight’s diary says: “Sep 30 1755 Lieutenant Peter Thomson died returning from the army from Crown Point by Lake George.”

In 1758 the town meeting adjourned for two hours “by reason of a lecture preached to the soldiers by their desire.”

Here is a war letter from another of the Thomson family: “Schenectady July the 4 1758 Loveing brother these few lines to you and I would inform you that I am in a considerable good estate of helth at the preasant and I hope that you are so to and I would inform you that we had a very hard journey a coming throw the woods and I remember my duty to my miother and my love to all my friends and Aaron Holbrook is considerable well and we have very good pork and peas and we have sum rice and sum butter and we have had sum poor bread but now we have flour &c and I would inform you that one or more of our men in this rigement has got small Pox and we do expect to march from hear in a few days and then go to the great Carrin Place to Bild forts all most up to Oswago and no more for the present so

I remane your Loving Brother Peter Thomson To Mr Joseph Thomson of Bellingham in nawengland."

A year later another Thomson letter came to Bellingham: "Fort Cumberland Aug ye 29 1759 I have a short time to Right for the vesel that we ware a going in had got a ground and were forst to stay for the tide we Are a going to a french town abought thurty milds of to take it the Leters that I had I received them the 9 of this month two of them from you and one from Samuel Daniels and I have had one from him since from halifax I begin to think about hom but I am content yet I here that the narers (Narrows) are taken and our Esterd (Eastern) armies are in prospect of doing something. I should be glad to have another Leter if I could but Lay up sum aples for me that I may eat one bely full I here that Aron Holbrook has good fortin and has drawed fifty dolers and I am a going to git sum to if they do not git my skelp for the want of time I must wind of no more at present.

"Remember your friend Daniel Thomson Take good care of my things I hope to com hom this this fall but we are not quit sertin of it."

In 1758 the town of Holliston reminded the General Court that two years before a Nova Scotia family of refugees of eight persons was ordered to be supported half by Holliston and half by Bellingham, but the kindly sheriff brought them all to Holliston to avoid separating them. The town of Bellingham was now ordered therefore to receive them all and provide for their comfortable support. Three pounds seven shillings was voted for them in 1762 under the name of the family of James Merow.

In early years the school was kept by citizens of the town, and the first one to be named is Michael Metcalf in

1760. His successor in 1765 and other years was Benjamin Partridge.

In 1762 the bad condition of the old meeting house caused a vote for a committee of men from other towns to recommend a central spot for a new one. The prospect of disagreement made this no small matter, and five pounds was voted for the committee's expenses, but the old one and then the house of the Baptists was used for just forty years longer, till the present town house was built. The next year it was voted "that the Knowl over Charles River on the right hand a going to Dr. Corbett's house on this side of the Baptist meeting house be a stated place for this Town if they see cause to build a meeting house on."

In 1764 Benjamin Partridge, the schoolmaster, got his pay for five years' services as town treasurer; it was fifteen shillings. This is written in one of his books:

Benjamin Partridge

His Book gave To me 1742

His son presented another polite bill to the town besides: "The account of Benjamin Partridge for the rent of my house Lett to the French famely viz James Mero the sum which I expect the Town will pay is 1£ 18s. Please to grant the same if you think proper.

BENJ PARTRIDGE JR."

In 1765 there came a strange and complicated quarrel over the town meeting. The regular annual meeting was held on March 6, and it adjourned to March 15. At

that time it was voted to dismiss the moderator at his request, and for some reason that is not apparent, to dismiss all the other officers who were chosen with him. Others were now chosen in their places, though nineteen voters protested. A petition to the General Court headed by the man chosen treasurer March 6, caused the action of the March 15 meeting to be annulled. The town was ordered to complete the March 6 list of officers. A meeting for that purpose in July started with a dispute about the moderator. The March 6 moderator was chosen again. Eleven men wanted four additional selectmen chosen, to make nine in all; the meeting could not agree on that proposal and had to adjourn without deciding for or against it. In October, however, by order of the Superior Court, another meeting was held and nine men were elected, though twenty-six voters protested. They were upheld by the General Court, which had to interfere the next January to declare that a second annual meeting could not increase the number of selectmen and assessors chosen originally on March 5, but only choose the other town officers required. Caleb Phillips, the March 6 treasurer, won at last, and he was re-elected for four years more; the next year the number of selectmen became five again, as it was before.

“To Mfrs Ioshua phillips David Thomfson Elifha Burr & Elias Thayer Serjeants of the Military Company in Bellingham.

“You are hereby required to make diligent Inquiry into the State of Said Company, and on Thursday next to take an Exact list of the names and view the arms of Such Soldiers and Inhabitants within the Limits of it as well those on the alarm, as on the training band list, and to See whether Each of them is provided with a well fixed firelock or mufquet of musquet or bastard

musquet bore the barrel not less than three feet and an half a Snapsack a collar with twelve bandaliers or Cartuch box one pound of Good powder, twenty bullets fit for his gun and twelve flints a Good Sword or Cutlaff, a worm and priming wire fit for his Gun and Immediately after make return to me of Said List and of any Defects of Arms or otherwise, and the names of Defective persons that they may bee prosecuted as the Law has provided and Such Care may be taken as is proper to Remedy the Same Fail not Bellingham September the 19 1766

John Goldsbury Jun^r Capt. of S^d Company”

In 1767 town warrants were to be posted in the three meeting houses in town; besides the old original one and that of the Baptists there was another at the South End never finished, used by Universalists and later by Wright Curtis as a tavern, at Crooks Corner.

“1771 To the Selectmen . . . these are to certefie you one . . . came into my house the Ninth Day of this Instant December how Long he will tarye with me I Can not tell he is a poor man & says yt he is 63 years old he behaves well John Corbitt.”

“Petition to the Gen Ct We Apprehend that the Town is overburdened in the valuation of 1772 in that there is set to our town more than our Proportion to each \$1000. And in being fined £6 in the year 1771 and £8 in the year 1773 for not sending a Representative.

“Our reasons of complaint are: That one third of the Inhabitants are Really Poor and the limits of the Town Small Being two miles a quarter and 8 rods wide in the middle & southward, towards the North a little wider & 5 or 6 miles long. That the greater part of the land is sandy Dry Pitch Pine or hard Barren land. That the assessors who returned our valuation to the General Court in 1772 made a mistake. They set down

to us two Iron works when in fact there is not nor ever was any in Bellingham. That sd Assessors set to us 10 Tan houses or shops. That one of these has been Useless for more than 7 years & no profit to the Town. That one of the shops set to us belongs to the owner of a Fullin mill & he uses the shop only to sheer Dye & Press in, And ought not to be added to the Town besides or over & above the fullin mill as a separate building. That several of the shops are Blacksmiths & so little done in it, that it would be as well for the owners & the Town if there was none in it. That one Potash is only a shed & but one small kettell in it & never much Done in it. That in 1772 we had not one Trading shop in the town. That there are four Mills set to the Town; which are all on the same stream & Dont go above four months in a Year By reason of flowing meadows in the spring & want of water in the fall. That we are obliged to go out of Town for most of our Smith work mill work & all our Shop Goods. That Endeavors have been used to obtaine the Oreginal accounts that the Committee of valuation had but have been unsuccessful therein. That we have been favoured by Several Respectfull members with Copys of some of them And by them we find that shops &c are set to Bellingham which is the farthest Town in the County of Suffolk from Boston at a greater sum than in other towns nearer. That Cow Pastures Tuns of English hay Barels of Cyder . . . are set to us as high as in other towns. All which appears to us Unequal. That it is a grief to us that we are not Able to mainttain a Member with You & Support our families & our Poor & Pay our Taxes. That we hope eir long to Enjoy the Priviledge of a Member with You. That we acknowledge the favours shown us by the Assembly Peticularly that when we were fined about 20 years ago,

on our Setting forth our Poverty the then Assembly remitted our fine & we never were fined before or since untill the Year 1771.

("We pray for a lower rate, remission of said fines, and excuse for not sending a Represent this year)

"John Metcalf Robert Smith Samuel Scott Committee.

"This committee did not proffer the above Petition."

It was written by John Metcalf.

"1773 Put to vote to see if the town will send to Court aney more to get the fines of (off) that we are fined for not sending a Representative in years passed. Passed in the negetive."

In 1774 the old first meeting house was finally sold at auction in several lots for £9 4s.

Now come the anxious times of the Revolution. In 1774 Luke Holbrook was a delegate to the Provincial Congress at Cambridge, and the town voted to buy powder. A committee of inspection of fifteen men was chosen to see that each man was prepared for his duty "are a (any) three of them to be a coram" (quorum). The town kept a representative in the Provincial Congress and paid his expenses. It voted a bounty to its soldiers and had its committee of correspondence. Stephen Metcalf was the town's first representative at the General Court in 1775, and went with elaborate and fervid instructions, as the custom was.

England's authority was promptly disowned in the following resignation of the Selectmen: "We the Subscribers Whose Names are hereunto affixed do of our own free Will and Accord freely fully and absolutely resign and disclaim any Power or Authority We have held or might have, hold, use, possess or enjoy by Virtue of any Commission we have held under Thomas Hutchinson

Esqr late Governor of this Province; And that for the future We Will not Exercise any Power or Authority by Virtue of the Same In Witness Whereof we have hereunto Set our hands this Ninth Day of January Anno Domini 1775.

“Joseph Holbrook Daniel Penniman Jesse Holbrook.”

In 1776 the town warrant was under the new name, “The Government and People of Massachusetts Bay.”

“July 4 1776 Voted that in case the Honble Continental Congress should think it necessary for the safety of the united colonies to declare them independent of Great Britain, The Inhabitants of this town with their lives & fortunes will cheerfully support them in the measure.”

“July 22 1776 Met at 6 A M at Elias Thayer’s house and voted to pay four men £11 each” and to borrow money.

In September the Massachusetts House of Representatives resolved “that the towns consider whether they will give their consent that this House & Council enact a Constitution, and if they would direct that it be made public before being ratified by this Assembly.” But when the royal authority came to an end, the towns felt themselves almost sovereign, like the Colonies of the Confederation before the adoption of the United States Constitution. They were not looking for a constitution made by any other authority than their own. Already in May Bellingham had instructed its Representative Stephen Metcalf to try for a more democratic government, more economical and closer to the common people. In October it chose a special committee to reply to this resolve of the House, consisting of Dr. John Corbet, “Crownor” John Metcalf, Elder Noah Alden, Deacon Samuel Darling and Lieut. Seth Hall, and voted to print

their report. It was as follows, adopted by the town in Dec 1776:

“ We are of opinion that the settling a form of government for this State is a matter of the greatest Importance of a civil nature that we were ever concerned in and ought to be proceeded in with the greatest caution and deliberation. It appears to us that the General Assembly of this State have well expressed that power always resides in the body of the people. We understand that all males above 21 years of age meeting in each separate town and acting the same thing and all their acts united together make an act of the body of the people. We apprehend it would be proper that the form of government originate in each town, and by that means we may have ingenuity of all the state, and it may qualify men for public action, which might be effected if the present Hon House of Representatives would divide the State into districts of about thirty miles diameter or less if it appear most convenient, so that none be more than fifteen miles from the center of the district, that there may be an easy communication between each town and the center of its district, that no town be divided, and that each town choose one man out of each 30 inhabitants to be a committee to meet as near the center of the district as may be; to meet about six weeks after the House of Representatives have issued their order for the towns to meet to draw a form of government, and the same committee to carry with them the form of government their town has drawn to the district meeting and compare them together and propose to their towns what alteration their town in their opinion ought to make, and said committee in each district to adjourn to carry to their several towns and lay before them in town meeting for that end, the form of government each district has

agreed to, and the town agrees to or alters as they see meet; after which the district committee meets according to adjournment and revise the form of government; after which each district committee choose a man as a committee to meet all as one committee at Watertown at 12 weeks after the order of the House of Representatives for the town, first meeting to draw a form of Government, which committee of the whole State may be empowered to send precepts to the several towns in this State to choose one man out of sixty to meet in a convention at Watertown or such other town as such committee shall judge best. Six weeks from the time of said district's last settling the one man out of sixty, to meet in convention to draw from the forms of government drawn by each committee one form of government for the whole state; after which said convention sends to each town the form of government they have drawn for the town's confirmation or alteration and then adjourn, notifying each town to make return to them of their doings at said convention and at said adjournment said convention draw a general plan or form of government for the State, so that they add nothing to nor diminish nothing from the general sense of each town, and that each town be at the charge of all those employed in the affair."

In the midst of the excitement and distress of the war time a prominent man, Sylvanus Scott, died, and his wife three days later, of smallpox as their gravestone says. The next month the town voted, "Whereas some people think they have small pox, the constable is to impress the house of John Coombs for a small pox hospital. The selectmen are to provide a doctor and nurse. Each person to pay on leaving after one week after inoculation \$8, or \$7 if they board themselves. Also voted that the town forbids any Person from having the

Small Pox in the house of Daniel Penniman or Silas Penniman Except sd Silas who is so bad that it is dangerous to remove him, and if any Person or Persons shall be so Presumptuous as to have the Small Pox in either of them Housen they shall forfeit to the town Ten Pounds to be recovered of them by the town treasurer."

Again in May of the next year the Selectmen issued a warrant for a special town meeting, "1 To See if the Town will give Leave that Jabez Metcalf and such others as may Joyn with him in Building a house on the Land of John Metcalf at his New orchard in the wood North of the County Road that the said Jabez Metcalf his Wife and child may have the Small Pox and others in Said house. 2 Or See if the Town will give Leave that the Sd Jabez Metcalf Wife and others May have the Small Pox in Any other house in This Town."

In May 1777 Ezekiel Bates was chosen to procure and lay before a special committee evidence of the inimical disposition of any inhabitant to the United States of America.

"Sep 22 1777 chose a committee of seven to report what more to do for men (of the army) in this town." In May, 1779, a committee was chosen to hire men for the service of the United States at the town's expense.

The following account of a Bellingham soldier's experience is in his own words, somewhat shortened. "I Joseph Frost of Bellingham Enlisted into the American Armie During the War in September 1776, & I was at the taking General Burguine in 1777. it was written on my Enlistment (a Bounty which I Recd) & I was to have five hundred acors of land or five Hundred Dollars at the End of the War and Monthly Wages (& after wards a Bounty of 80 Dollars Granted by Congress) which Bounty I have not Recd.

“in August 1778 I was in a Scouting Party at the white Plains when I & one Griffin was taken by four men on the British light horse Who came upon us as we ware Drinking at a well they rushed on us out of the wood, & they carried us onto long Island Put us into Prison in a meeting house there, & two or three Dayes after we were taken I & P Griffin Dug under the Sell of the Prison in the Night Secreted our Selves on long Island near a week & Got of long Island & Got a Passage unto Sea Brook in Connecticut, from thence I came to Boston and Enlisted on bord the Continental friggit named the Rawlee of 36 Guns this was in September 1778 I then Recd forty Dollars Bounty & was to have ten Dollars per month Wages three Days after we sailed Capt Berry was Drove ashore on the wooden Ball Eastward of Boston By Sr James Wallace on Bord the Expere-ment of 50 Guns & the Unicorn 28 Guns British men of war, Capt Berre with near half his men in Botes Got off in the night, I & the rest of the men were taken & carried to York & I & Eleven more were Put on Bord A British-man of war named the Delleware Friggit Capt Mason on Bord which we remained near 8 months all but 4 of us were over Perswaded to do Duty on Bord, But I & 3 more would not tho striped & thretened to be whiped, the vessell crusing about Came Near Guernsey near old England we 4 were carried on shore and committed to the Goal in Guernsey & there kept untill Peace was Declared we were then set at liberty & we shiped on Bord a vessell Bound to the West Indies & we got to Antego & Now I am Got to Bellingham again September 30 1784.”

From 1775 to 1780 the bounties paid to Revolutionary soldiers amounted to twelve thousand one hundred and fifty-eight pounds in Continental currency of varying value and two thousand five hundred and sixty-four

pounds in solid coin. Three hundred and twenty different payments were made, but some men had more than one term of service. There were only one hundred and twenty-one families in town by the census of 1790, fifteen years later, with one hundred and eighty-seven males over sixteen years of age. In 1905 the town spent seventy-five dollars in marking Revolutionary graves; twenty-one at North Bellingham, thirteen at South Bellingham and a few others.

There is no complete list of the soldiers in the town records, but these ninety names have been found:

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Amos Adams | Joshua Darling | Nathan Holbrook | Sylvanus |
| Samuel Alvison | Levi " | Phineas " | Ichabod Seaver |
| Silas " | Moses jr " | Seth " | George Slocomb |
| Peter Albee | Richard " | David Jones | Robert Smith jr |
| Elisha Alden | Ichabod Draper | Joel Leg | David Staples |
| Noah Alden jr | Stephen Easty | Jabez Metcalf | Elias Thayer |
| Simon Alvison | Amos Ellis | Joseph Partridge | Ezekiel " |
| John Arnold | Nathan Freeman | Silas Penniman | Nathaniel " |
| Samuel " | Joseph Frost | David Perry | Amos Thomson |
| James Bailey | Thaddeus Gibson | Joseph " | Caleb " |
| David Belcher | John Goodman | Lot " | Cyrus " |
| Ichabod Bosworth | John Hall | Oliver " | Daniel Trask |
| Abel Bullard | Elisha Hayward | Caleb Phillips | Benjamin Twitchell |
| William Chase jr | Ezekiel " | John " | Joseph Ward jr |
| John Chilson | Aaron Hill | Joshua " | Abner Wight |
| Benjamin Clark | Moses Hill | Stephen " | Samuel Wight jr |
| Daniel Cook jr | Abijah Holbrook | Samuel Pickering | David Thomson |
| David Cook jr | Amariah " | John Roekwood | Nathan Trask |
| John Cook | Asa " | Joseph " jr | Samuel Twist |
| John Coombs jr | Asahel " | Levi " | John Upham |
| Levi Daniels | Elijah " | David Scott | Stephen Wyman |
| Dennis Darling | Henry " | Jonathan | |
| Eben Darling | Capt Jesse " | Nathan | |

The town's great interest in the Revolution and improvement in government and the general public welfare was accompanied by an increased demand for public education. In 1777 a public subscription was made, to be "added to the old School Bank money on hand," which was one hundred and ninety-three pounds

four shillings seven pence. Seth Arnold gave ten pounds, and thirty-one persons in all raised one hundred pounds, "a permanent fund, the interest to be used for schools on the plan agreed on in 1744."

The General Court in 1778 met as a convention and formed a constitution for the state, which was rejected by a vote of the people of five to one. In Bellingham John Metcalf's diary says: "73 males voted to Disapprove the form of Government & none for it." The next May our town "voted that it is Time to have a New Constitution or form of Government Made As Soon as May Bee. They think the General Court Out Not to Be imPowered to Call a Convention to Draw up a form of Government." The General Court called a convention as the towns wished, and the Bellingham minister was a member of it. He wrote to his best adviser and friend, the Baptist minister at Middleborough:

"Our town have chosen me as thare Delegate to go to Cambridge for the Sole purpose of forming a New Constitution or forme of Government for this State the waitest affar of a temporal nature I humbly conceive that Ever this state tuck in hand the vue I have of the matter is that it is Essentially nessary that in the first place thare should be a bill of Rights assertaining what are the natural sivel and Religious Rights of the people and a form of government predecated upon said bill of rights perfectly agreabel thare to and Never Know laws afterwards made Repugnant to said Bill of Rights but as I am sensabel that the delegates will not be all of my mind and the work is grate and my gifts Small and I am inexperienced in a work of this sort Dear brother I pray you to favour me with your mind on the subject Expesualy what are the Rights of the people and how that Bill of Rights ought to be Drawn. I hope my dear

brethren will not forgit me in thare prayers to God that I may be Enabled to Contend Earnestly bouldly and wisely for the libertys of the people in general and for the libertys of the Lords people in purticklure."

"Aug 6 1779 To Mr Noah Alden Sir you being chosen By the Inhabitants of this Town to Represent them in a convention at Cambridge next September for the sole Purpose of forming a Constitution for the Massachusetts we your Constituants Claim it as Our Inherent right at all times to Instruct those that Represent us But more necessary on such an Important Object which not only So Nearly Concerns ourselves But our Posterity. we Do in the first place instruct you Previous to your Entering upon the framing of a form of Government you See that Each part of the State have Properly Deligated their Power for Such a Purpose and that a Bill of Rights Be formed where in the Natural Rites of Individuals Be Clearly ascertained that is all Such Rights as the Supream Power of the State Shall (have) no authority to Controal, to be a part of the Constitution that you use your Influence that the Legislative Power consist of a Senate and House of Representatives, the Representatives to Be Annually Chosen from the Towns as they were in the year 1776. that the Constitution be so framed that Elections be free and frequent, most likely to Prevent bribery Corruption and Influnce that the Executive Power be So Lodged as to Execute the Laws with Dispatch . . . the Senators to be annually Chosen by the people That the holding the Court of probate . . . in but one town in the County as hereto fore . . . has been a grievous burden to us . . . that Each Incorporated Town may have power to hold a Court of Probate . . . and record Deeds in the same Town. We further Instruct you that when you have Drawn a form

of government you cause a fair Coppy thereof to be Printed . . . that the Convention Adjourn to some futer Day and the Coppy be laid before your several Towns for their Consideration and Amendment to be returned to the Convention. That the Juditial be So established that Justice may be impartially Demonstrated without Enormous Expense that the Right of Trial by Jury be kept Sacred and Close . . . that Statutes of Old England nor any foreign Law be adopted . . . that a County Assemble be Established to Grant County Taxes in each county and settle all the county Matters."

The convention met in September, 1779. In the Bill of Rights, Article III, Religious Rights, required the most discussion, lasting about two weeks. After a free and general debate, a special committee of seven was chosen, containing two men who became governors of the State, and two who became judges of its Supreme Court, these four being strict supporters of the old established church, a prominent patriot from Western Massachusetts, Rev. David Sanford of the West Parish and his neighbor Mr. Alden. The humble Baptist elder from Bellingham, who knew that the work was "grate and his gifts Small," was the chairman of this important committee. Neither its discussions nor the debates of the whole convention have been preserved. Its reported draft of Article III was debated three days, and then assigned for further consideration. It was adopted by the convention without much change, and remained in force till 1833. In substance it was this: As happiness and good government depend on piety, religion and morality; as these cannot be generally spread without public worship and instruction; therefore the legislature shall require towns to provide for public worship and teachers of morality, and shall

require people to attend church. Towns shall choose their own public teachers. All taxes for religious purposes shall support the teacher desired by those who pay them, provided the town has such a teacher; otherwise the public teacher of the town. All religious denominations shall be equally protected by the law.

This article was not more liberal in effect than the conditions that had prevailed before. The smaller and poorer sects like the Baptists, who could not possibly maintain a church in every town, could still be taxed unjustly, though they had some relief in special laws and in the forbearance of some towns. The Baptists immediately protested to the General Court, but in vain.

Article III was opposed by three classes: some wanted all sects publicly supported, but treated more equally, some wanted only voluntary support, and a few wanted greater strictness in favoring the old church. In 1833 Amendment XI provided that any religious society may tax its members only with their own consent.

After this, the longest discussion of the convention, it adjourned November 11 till the next January. This happened to be the worst winter since 1717; the Hartford Turnpike through our town was the only road open to travel towards the central part of the State; and the convention presented its constitution to the people on March 2. In June the convention declared it adopted by the votes of the people, and it went into effect. This convention has been called the body of men which best expressed the spirit of the American Revolution.

In 1782 in its instructions to its Representative, Stephen Metcalf, the town wanted to have all State salaries reduced, Representatives paid by their own towns, the General Court to meet away from Boston, a report to be made of all State income and expenses,

“that so the people who have a right to know, may know how the money is expended that they pay,” a separate report of the State’s annual expense for “Continental affairs” and of its debt for that purpose, and a great reduction in the cost of getting justice in the courts.

Aaron Holbrook was the town’s first Representative after Stephen Metcalf, in 1788. He was instructed to try to establish courts of small circuit “to be nearer the small towns,” and “that the banefull gugaws of Briton and all West India goods like sugar, tea & coffee that the Publick can best do without, be heavily dutied. We charge you to encourage home manufactorys.”

The Constitution of the United States was adopted in Massachusetts in 1788 by one hundred and eighty-seven Yeas and one hundred and sixty-eight Nays, with just nine men absent. In our county only five men in thirty-nine were opposed, the delegates of Stoughton, Sharon, Medway, Wrentham and Bellingham. One writer remarks that “Medway and Bellingham and other towns near Rhode Island had been more or less otherwise-minded all through the Revolutionary times.” There were over twenty Baptists in this convention, and two-thirds of them voted against the constitution, as forming too strong a government; Mr. Alden was one of them.

A description of the town in 1784 in a “Gazetteer” is as follows: “Bellingham There is but one pond, beaver dam pond, remarkable for depth of water and miry shores almost surrounded by a cedar swamp. Into Charles River flow three small streams, North Branch, Stall Brook, Beaver Dam Brook. Peter’s River and Bunge Brook in the south part empty at Providence.

“There are two grist mills, two saw mills and one fulling mill but of little or no use except in winter for want of water, nor all used even then. Roads are tol-

erably good but in some places very sandy. The trade is very small; people depend on the land and some mechanical employments. Almost every family is provided with a pair of looms by which they make nearly enough clothing for themselves. The number of farms is about 80. The inhabitants are about equally divided between the Congregational and Baptist persuasions. The latter have a house and a settled minister. The principal part of the Congregationalists in 1747 was incorporated with the West Parish of Medway."

Poverty began to be more noticeable after the war, and perhaps for that reason swine were allowed to run at large again. No overseers of the poor were chosen till 1775. In 1786 "Voted that the Overseers of the Poore Put out the Town's Poore at the Best of their Disgression either at Vandue or any other way." A man working on the highway got four pence an hour and the same amount for his cart and oxen.

The valuation for 1787 was:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 91 houses at 45s., | £204, 15s. | Money at interest and on hand, | £1,000 |
| 72 barns at 18s., | 64, 16s. | Goods, | 271 |
| 20 stoves at 5s., | 5, 5s. | 63 horses, | 378 |
| 2 mills at 50s., | 5 | 117 oxen, | 319 |
| 627 acres of mowing, | 232, 3s. | 305 cows, | 1,220 |
| 172 barrels of "cyder", | 21 | 381 goats and sheep, | 115 |
| 598 acres of tillage, | 125 | 57 swine, | 34 |
| 360 acres of meadow, | 239 | Coaches and chaises, | 40 |
| 1172 acres of pasture, | 146 | Gold, | 10 |
| 5099 acres of woodland, | 111 | Silver, | 127 |

A cow was nearly worth two houses.

The first school committee for the whole town was chosen in 1791, and one constable and collector instead of two. He offered to collect the taxes for £2 14 s.

In 1792 and 1793 the town refused to provide a house for smallpox inoculation: "The Town disapprove of the Small pox coming into Town Contrary to Law."

In 1794 the tax collector's pay was in dollars instead of pounds. Swine were confined to their residences from this time on.

In 1798 three hundred and seven pupils in six districts cost \$219, and \$200 was spent on highways, paying wages of 6 cents an hour.

In 1798 the United States laid a direct tax on real estate of two classes, of which the original details have been preserved. Stephen Metcalf was the principal assessor for the three towns of Bellingham, Wrentham and Franklin, and Laban Bates was one of his four assistants. Ninety-three houses with lots of not over two acres were found in Bellingham worth at least \$100, of which these fourteen were valued at \$400 or more:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| William Adams | \$140 | Daniel Jones | \$825 | John Scammell | \$660 |
| Laban Aldrich | 517 | David Jones | 640 | Seth Shearman | 660 |
| Laban Bates | 962 | Stephen Metcalf | 660 | Eliab Wight | 440 |
| Ezra Forristall | 495 | Daniel Paine | 495 | William Whittaker | 638 |
| Jesse Hill | 605 | Daniel Penniman | 543 | | |

On other land than house lots, one hundred and fourteen men were taxed, of whom thirty-one had land valued at \$800 or more:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|------------------|--------|-------------------|---------|
| Amos Adams | \$1000 | Joseph Fairbanks | \$2100 | John Scammell | *\$3128 |
| Laban Aldrich | 1050 | Ezra Forristall | 1500 | Samuel Scott | 1300 |
| Ezekiel Bates | 2400 | Aaron Hill | 900 | Saul Scott | 1460 |
| Laban Bates | 5050 | Seth Holbrook | 900 | Nehemiah Shearman | 1050 |
| John Chilson | 2000 | Stephen " | 950 | Seth " | 1550 |
| Joseph " | 900 | David Jones | 3000 | Simon Slocomb | 900 |
| Joshua " | 1450 | Elisha Kelly | 1260 | Pelataiah Smith | 810 |
| Ezekiel Cook | 1200 | Stephen Metcalf | 2032 | Elias Thayer | 1330 |
| Stephen Cook | 800 | Gideon Paine | 1500 | Eliab Wight | 900 |
| Amariah Cushman | 810 | Daniel Penniman | 1720 | | |
| Amos Ellis | 1050 | Joshua Phillips | 1360 | | |

The nine men who owned the most real estate within the town were Laban Bates \$6112, John Scammell \$3788, David Jones \$3640, Stephen Metcalf \$2692, Daniel

Penniman \$2263, Seth Shearman \$2210, Joseph Fairbanks \$2100, John Chilson \$2000, and Ezra Forristall \$1995. Of course these small figures are not understood unless we remember the changed value of money and the few rich men in early times. The richest man in the United States in 1799 was thought to be George Washington, whose property was estimated at \$500,000, mostly land and slaves.

The building of the town house in 1802 has been related in the last chapter. It is shown in the town seal in its original form, before the curved top of the porch became unsafe and was removed.

The first vote in town meeting after choosing officers had kept its place sacredly from the beginning: swine and cattle shall or shall not run at large this year. It had been negative for fifteen years, but in 1809 "Those People that have but one cow may run at Large by obtaining leave of the Selectmen."

The town gave at least five soldiers to the War of 1812 with Great Britain, whose graves are in the Centre Cemetery: Joseph Adams, Laban Burr, Mason Clark, William Paine, and Warren L. Lazell. In 1814 a voluntary and popular military company was formed, the Bellingham Rifles, which had a long and successful career. The town was not excused from maintaining its standing militia company besides.

The store at Bellingham Centre had now been kept for several years. Christopher Slocumb ended his partnership with John Thayer there in 1815.

In 1816 it was voted "to transfer all business that hath been done at the September meeting to the April meeting and discontinue the former."

During its first century the town's population had grown very slowly except at last, when the factories

were built on Charles River. Mr. Fisher estimated six persons to a family at the beginning, and two hundred and forty persons in all. A state census in 1765 showed four hundred and sixty-five in eighty-two families living in seventy-two houses, two hundred and thirty of them children under sixteen, and eight negroes. In 1776 the total was six hundred and twenty-seven; in 1790 the first United States census showed seven hundred and thirty-five, in one hundred and twenty-one families. Three hundred and thirty-two persons then bore one of these eight names:

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Adams, 4 families, 27 persons. | Holbrook, 12 families, 71 persons. |
| Cook, 8 families, 57 persons. | Scott, 6 families, 47 persons. |
| Darling, 9 families, 46 persons. | Thayer, 5 families, 36 persons. |
| Hill, 4 families, 17 persons. | Thompson, 4 families, 31 persons. |

In 1800 the population fell to seven hundred and six; in 1810 it was seven hundred and sixty-six, but in 1820 it had become one thousand thirty-four.



ADDISON E. BULLARD

CHAPTER X

THE MILLS

FOR its first century the people of this town were practically all farmers; during the second they have produced much more wealth in manufactures than on the farms, though the majority of the men have not been at work in the mills until lately. Of course the variety of employment has increased greatly in our time. Of the manufactured goods, boots and shoes were about one-third in value in both 1845 and 1876, but both before and since those dates cotton and woolen goods were generally at least three-fourths of the whole. So in a sense the mills have been the most important thing in the town during this last century. Here are some reports of its industries in the past.

In 1828 Bellingham was "an active and flourishing manufacturing town."

In 1831 three cotton factories with twenty-six looms and one thousand five hundred and seventy-six spindles made goods worth \$11,032; a woolen factory with nine looms and two hundred and forty spindles, goods worth \$2880.

In 1837 two mills with one thousand six hundred and seventy-two spindles made four hundred and twenty-seven thousand four hundred and seventy yards of cotton goods worth \$35,110, and employed twenty men and thirty-four women. The woolen mill with two sets of machinery made twenty-four thousand yards worth

\$62,000. Fourteen thousand five hundred and seventy pairs of boots and two hundred and twenty pairs of shoes were made, worth \$28,077, and one thousand four hundred and fifty straw bonnets worth \$2650.

In 1845 three cotton mills with two thousand five hundred and twenty spindles produced \$33,640 in print cloth, thread and sheetings, and the two set woolen mill \$10,000. Other products were brushes, carriages, farm tools, glue, straw braid, rowboats, etc. Boots were valued at \$48,862, lumber \$20,194, fruit one thousand four hundred and fifty-five bushels and hay one thousand fifty-two tons. All manufactures \$150,000.

In 1855 the boots and shoes came to \$117,000.

In 1860 three cotton factories with eighty-four looms and four thousand four hundred and twenty spindles produced \$18,700, the woolen mill \$500, three boot factories \$15,000, and two shoe shops \$90.

In 1875 the whole capital invested in town was \$480,000, and the product was \$638,547. \$150,000 invested in mills produced \$330,000 in goods, \$25,000 in boots and shoes produced \$33,000, and \$2500 in farm tools produced \$18,000.

In 1876 eleven manufacturing establishments had a capital of \$178,900 and produced \$544,530. Boots and shoes amounted to \$180,000; manufacturers of iron to \$1400. One hundred and fifty farms were valued at \$207,396. Agricultural products were \$94,017 and lumber had reached \$121,000 in one year.

In 1883 there were four factories, three gristmills, seven sawmills and five stores in town.

In 1885 ten manufacturing establishments, including two woolen mills, a boot factory and two food factories, produced \$419,412, and one hundred and thirty-one farms \$91,445.



W. H. CARY 1855-64, C. H. CUTLER 1864-78, W. A. McKEAN 1878-99, A. E. BULLARD 1899-1919

Almost all the colonists wore homespun clothes. A fulling mill to dress this cloth appeared at Watertown in 1662, and in three other towns by 1670. The first cotton mill in the United States was at Beverly in 1787. The Slater mill at Pawtucket started in 1798, the Medway Cotton Manufacturing Company began in 1804, and the Norfolk Cotton Factory at Dedham in 1808. Our town began the work two years later.

THE NORTH BELLINGHAM MILL, 1810

The first building was built in 1810 by Joseph Ray, a young stone mason of Blackstone. He built many other cotton mills in the Blackstone Valley, and his firm, Paine & Ray, also made cotton mill machinery, at one time in two factories. He ran a cotton mill of his own successfully at Hillsboro, New Hampshire, from 1826 to the hard times of 1839, when the failure of a great cotton firm in Rhode Island involved him with it. His notes were extended for five years, and he came to Unionville to live. He retired in 1844 and died in 1847, leaving three sons, who owned many mills in this vicinity.

James P., the oldest, taught school at fifteen years of age, worked in his father's mill at sixteen and started in business for himself in the panic year of 1837, buying two hundred pounds of cotton to make cotton batting. In 1844 he took his brother Frank into partnership, and the third brother Joseph G. in 1851. James P., the head of this firm, was also president of the Milford, Franklin and Providence Railroad and a director in many corporations. He died in 1894, and left two sons Edgar and James.

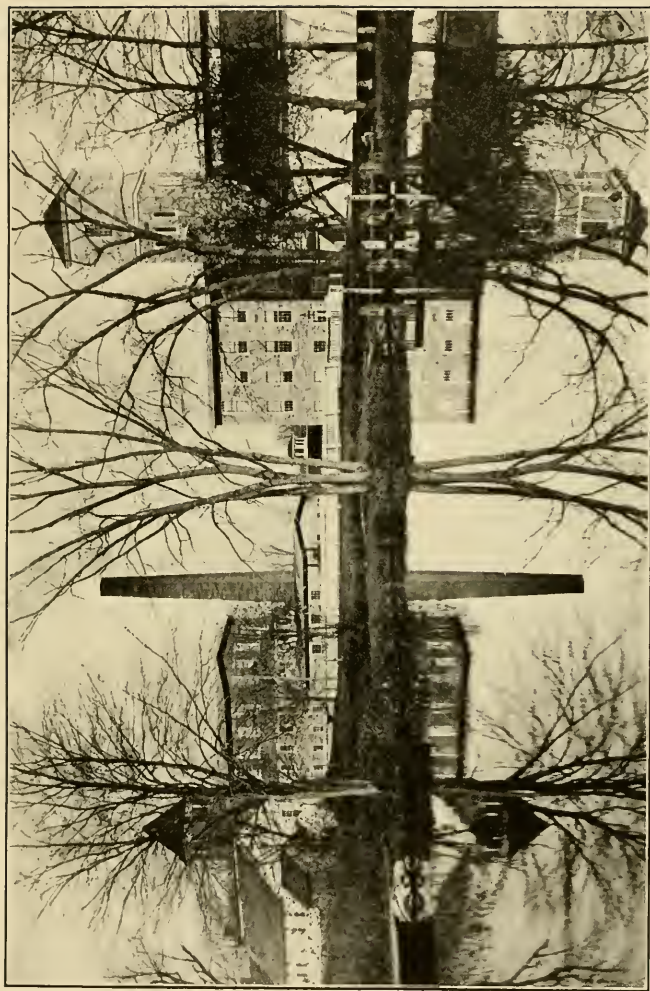
Frank B., the second brother, was interested in satinets, feltings and woolen stock, and fond of farming. He left the firm in 1860, and died in 1892, leaving only one son, William F. Ray. The third brother Joseph

began early in life to work for his brothers in their mill at Unionville, and started the first rag picker in this vicinity. The firm built one mill after another in several towns for both cotton and woolen manufacture, and gradually changed from cheaper to higher grades of cloth. The Ray Woolen Company mills have now generally passed over to the American Woolen Company. Mr. Ray was president of the Milford, Attleboro and Woonsocket Street Railroad, a director in many companies, and probably no man in this vicinity had larger business interests than he. He married the daughter of Joseph Rockwood of Bellingham, and made her home into an elegant summer residence, with a race course, an artificial pond and a stock farm. The estate after his death included nearly four hundred acres. Mr. Ray died in 1900, leaving two daughters.

The North Bellingham mill was first run by a company of which Dr. Nathaniel Miller of Franklin was the head. He was a graduate of Bowdoin College and the Harvard Medical School, and an eminent physician. He built a building near his house for the use of his patients. He had a small thread mill, and was a prominent citizen of the town.

In 1813 he sold to Samuel Penniman of South Milford one-eighth of their property of thirteen acres for \$162. He was the son of Landlord Penniman, and was starting the South Milford factory about this time. In 1814 another partner sold to "Dr. Nathaniel Miller, Whiting Metcalf of Franklin, Samuel Penniman and Seth Hastings of Mendon, now constituting the Bellingham Cotton Manufacturing Company" one-eighth of about sixty acres in three pieces for \$1840. Dr. Miller now owned one-half and the other three one-sixth each.

Seth Hastings was a prominent lawyer of Mendon,



THE NORTH BELLINGHAM MILL

whose opinion was often asked by Stephen Metcalf. He was born at Cambridge in 1762, graduated at Harvard College and settled in Mendon. The story is told that he hesitated between that town and Worcester, and decided that Mendon had a better prospect for him. He arrived with all his property tied up in a red handkerchief, but he married a rich wife and became a member of Congress, as did his son after him.

In 1815 Penniman sold two and one third of fifty-four acres and "a stone factory" to Hastings for \$1535. He sold his whole share, seven thirty-seconds, in 1820, to Joseph Ray and Rila Scott for \$984. These two men probably married sisters. Rila Scott was born on Scott Hill in 1795 and had five children. He was a cloth manufacturer in several towns in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire and settled in Miford in 1850. His father, Saul, 1674-1834, married a Ballou and had thirteen children. He was the son of Deacon Samuel, the son of Joseph, the "bloomer." Ray and Scott bought out the other partners also in 1820, and then sold the property, which was now fourteen acres, in 1822, to Underwood & Drake of Rhode Island for \$7650. This firm held it for two years and then sold it to Nathan A. Arnold, Peleg Kent, and Seth Arnold of Cumberland for \$8400.

Seth Arnold, 1799-1883, was a descendant of Richard Arnold, the first settler of Woonsocket, whose father came from England in 1635, and settled in Providence in 1661. Richard's grandson John built the first frame house at Woonsocket in 1711, and a gristmill below the falls. His grandson, Nathan, was a captain in the Revolution. He had a son Nathan whose wife lived to nearly one hundred years, and their son was Seth the cotton manufacturer. In 1840 he began to make patent medicines also, and

built up a great business. He was a man of a quiet, retiring disposition.

These purchasers gave Underwood & Drake a remarkable mortgage, promising \$377 every two months till \$5276 was repaid. In 1827 Saul Scott, Rila's father, who had lent \$2250 to Ray & Scott in 1820, released his claim on the property to the Pawtucket Bank for \$1000, and in the same year Samuel Metcalf of Providence, another creditor, got an execution against Arnold & Kent on their stone factory. In 1829 after the mortgage came into his hands, Jabez Ingraham of Seekonk, "Gentleman," sold to the Pawtucket Bank for \$10,000, fourteen acres, and the mill mortgaged by Arnold & Kent to Underwood & Drake. He may have had some other business with the bank at the same time. The bank held it only a few months, and sold it to Benedict & Wood, manufacturers, of Smithfield, for \$4000, and they sold it soon for the same sum to D. C. Cushing and Nathan Giles. Mr. Cushing died soon after, and his partner, Giles, a lame man, ran the mill till it burned in 1838. The next year he sold out half to Varnum D. Bates of Providence, a deacon in the First Baptist Church and a commission merchant, and the other half to Noah J. Arnold, a mill overseer from Coventry, Connecticut. They rebuilt it and ran it for twenty years. Arnold was an ardent Whig in politics, very active in the Harrison and Tyler presidential campaign.

Besides the North Bellingham mill, Bates & Arnold bought of Dwight Colburn for \$2400 in 1841 his stone cotton factory higher up the Charles River where the Red Mill is. The deed is very long, with about two thousand words, describing three tracts of land. Bates bought three-fourths and Arnold one-fourth. In 1842 they borrowed \$10,000 on a mortgage from a Bates firm

of Pawtucket. They paid Ruel Adams \$1060 for the right to flow his land for their mill pond, and bought such rights from several others in the next three or four years. They prospered for some time, but in 1854 they borrowed \$12,000 of Newell & Daniels of Providence, and in the hard times that came soon after Bates had to fail and in 1860 they surrendered both the upper and the lower mills to their creditors, Newell & Daniels.

By them the Bates & Arnold mill at North Bellingham was sold in 1864 to J. P., F. B., and J. G. Ray, the three sons of the man who built the original stone building there, at the war price of \$16,500. The brothers kept it for thirty-five years till 1899. Their superintendent for most of that time was Mr. Hiram Whiting. In 1879 the property was assessed at \$36,400.

In 1884 it was called a cotton warp woolen satinet mill with eight sets and one hundred and fifty hands, making one million yards a year. It had been a cotton mill till the Rays took it in 1864. In 1886 Mr. Rathbun of Woonsocket, who had been a partner in the firm, sold out to the others and they took the name of Rays Woolen Company.

In 1899 they sold this mill and another in Franklin to the American Woolen Company; the stamps on the deed indicate a price of \$100,000. The next year the American Woolen Company sold the North Bellingham mill with twelve lots of land to the Charles River Woolen Company of Bellingham at an apparent price of \$59,000. In 1912 this company was dissolved, and the property was bought by the newly incorporated Bellingham Woolen Company, of which A. E. Bullard is president and W. W. Ollendorf is treasurer.

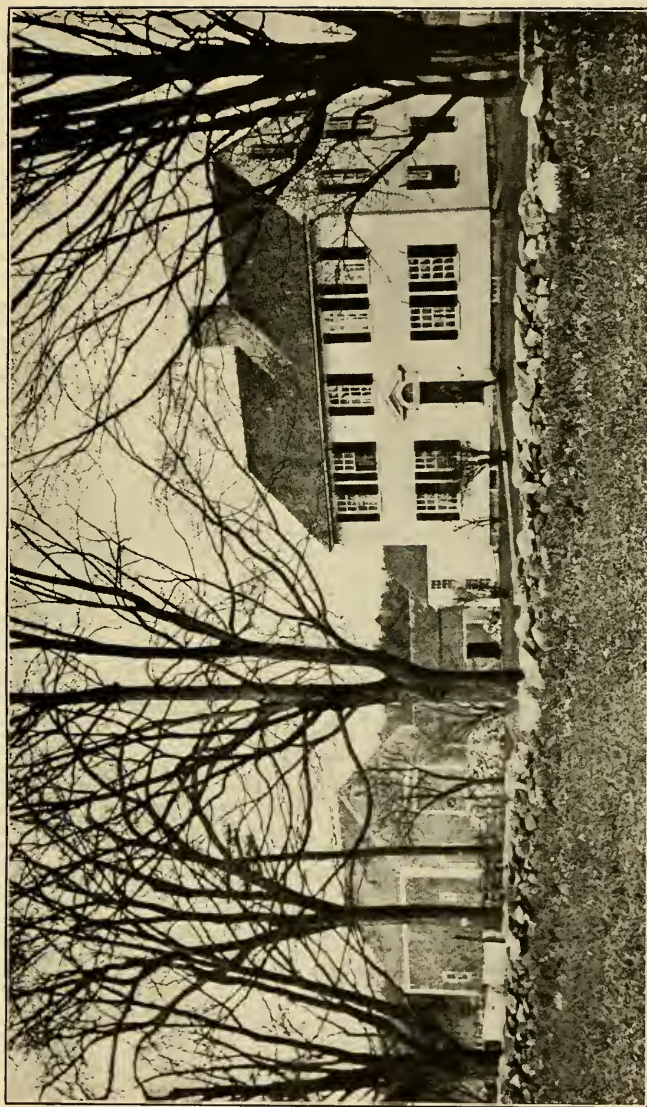
The present capital is \$95,000. There are five pickers, ten sets of cards, one hundred and sixty narrow looms

and three thousand woolen spindles. Two steam boilers are used, besides Edison electric current. The company has forty-nine tenements, a boarding house and a moving picture hall, and employs two hundred persons. The mill was run at night during the recent war to make silk yarn for powder bags, and it sold many thousand yards of its regular product, narrow cotton warp woolens, to the government.

THE CARYVILLE MILL

This was the second textile mill in town, started in 1813 by Joseph Fairbanks. The land where it stood was bought by Secretary Rawson of the Indians, sold by his son to Hayward, Sanford and Burch, in 1701, by Burch's son to John Metcalf in 1735, and by his grandson Stephen to his own son-in-law, Joseph Fairbanks, in 1800. He reserved the right to dig a channel to get water near the dam, "but not to injure the going of the mill."

The deed of 1813 gave Stephen Metcalf for \$71.43 and certain privileges, one hundred and one rods of land to own in common with Joseph Fairbanks, miller, and his son, Elijah, Ethan Cobb, Eliphalet Holbrook, Eliab Holbrook and Asahel Adams, seven in all, "near said Fairbanks' Mills," with the right to convey water from his pond in a trench to be dug and stoned ten feet wide and four feet deep "to a Cotton Factory which is calculated to be built," reserving to himself "18 by 20 feet of the southwest corner of the lower story of said Factory" for a gristmill. The factory to be built and half the expense of the dam in the future to be paid by the seven proprietors, the other half with the sawmill "and Trip Hammer Shop flume," to be supported by Fairbanks.



JOSEPH FAIRBANKS 1803-35, ELIJAH FAIRBANKS TO 1868, CALVIN FAIRBANKS TO 1902,
H. A. SPEAR IN 1919

Probably the quantity of iron manufactured here was always small; it may have come from the Mine Woods near North Bellingham, which were owned by the Metcalf family with others. They had another sawmill at least very soon after this time, where Holden's mill is now, which made this one less necessary, and allowed most of the power to go to the cotton machinery, which had the first claim upon it. But the gristmill was active for over fifty years, till Joseph's son Jonas sold to William Cary, the owner of the cotton mill in 1862, a quarter acre of land with his gristmill and dam, for \$1000.

Joseph Fairbanks was the great grandson of George Fairbanks the first settler of Bogastow (Millis), who with his neighbors built the famous stone house there for a refuge against the Indians in King Philip's War. He came to Caryville, bought land of the Metcalf family, and married Judge Stephen's daughter Mary in 1787. They had only four children. The younger son Jonas received the gristmill, while the older Elijah, my grandfather, kept the farm at the head of Pearl Street. Elijah had eight children, Jonas none, and Elijah's busy wife envied her idle sister-in-law who lived in such luxury that she even owned a special spider for toasting cheese.

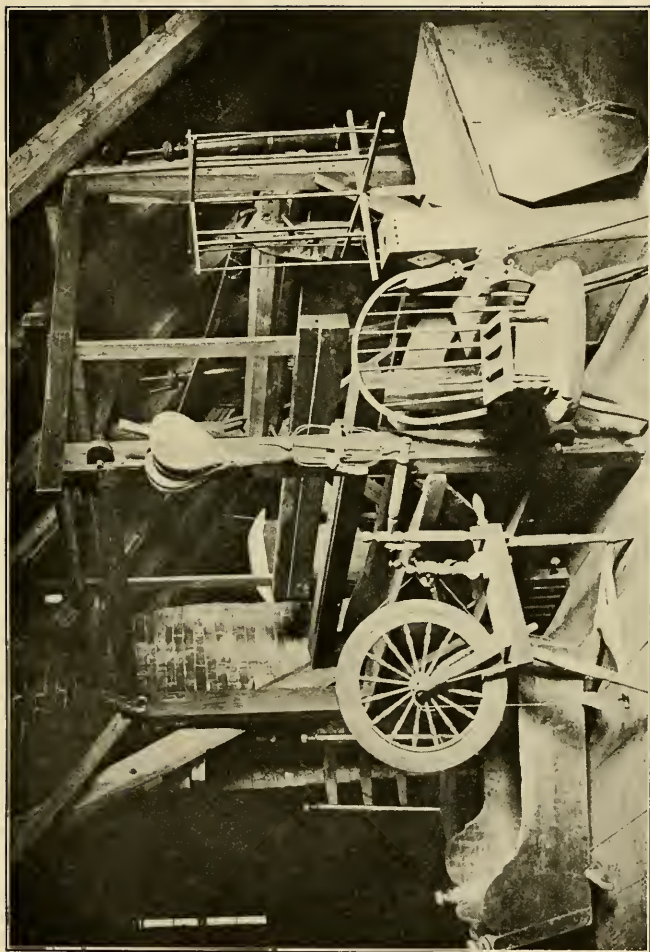
The seven partners built the stone cotton mill as they planned, and one of them sold his seventh to the others the next year for \$1250. In 1818 Joseph Fairbanks mortgaged his homestead to the West Parish of Medway, of which he was a member, for \$900. Ten years later came a catastrophe, for the mill was burnt, and "he walked the floor all night."

The Bellingham farmers were satisfied with their experiment, and passed it over to men who gave their lives to the business. It was bought and started again

by Alexander Wright and Royal Southwick, two of the early manufacturers of Lowell, from the five remaining partners, and Joseph Fairbanks received \$1071 for his three-sevenths share. The purchasers gave a mortgage of \$2200, and two years later in 1830 they sold it to William White for \$4800. He borrowed \$1200 of the West Parish for this purchase, but in two years more in 1832, he sold to the Bellingham Cotton Manufacturing Company at North Bellingham, the factory and land of Joseph Fairbanks & Company, with water to run six hundred spindles to be taken before all other uses of this power, for \$10,000.

In 1839, after the hard times, George Barber of Medway sued the Bellingham Cotton Manufacturing Company and got a judgment of \$9741. He bought their Joseph Fairbanks property at a sheriff's sale for \$7000, and held it till 1848, when he sold it to his son-in-law, William H. Cary, for \$5000, subject to mortgages of \$1700. Cary gave him a mortgage of \$3000. In the hard times of 1857 he gave another mortgage, to Clark Newell & Company of Boston, of \$10,000. He weathered the storm, and in 1862 he bought out the only other user of this water power, Jonas Fairbanks, for \$1000. Only two years later, in 1864, he sold the mill finally, subject to a mortgage of \$3700, to Joseph Ray for \$20,000. He afterwards considered this price too low for the times.

George Barber and his two sons-in-law had held the mill for a generation. He was the great great great grandson of George Barber, one of the first settlers of Medfield, and born at Millis in 1772. He was a clothier and wool carder at Medway Village soon after 1800, and owned a small mill for dressing cloth that was built by Job Harding in 1795. The wool was carded into rolls about three feet long, to be spun and woven in farmers' houses, and then dressed, dyed and finished. He had



ATTIC OF THE HOUSE BUILT BY JOSEPH FAIRBANKS IN 1803

Cradle, flax wheel, distaff, woolen cloth loom, bellows, foot stove, wooden lantern, winding blades, etc.

from six to ten apprentices, called the Barber devils, when various pranks occurred in the village. With two other men he built a cotton mill in Medway, which afterwards belonged to William H. Cary. In 1826 with Alexander Wright, one of the original carpet manufacturers of Lowell, he went to Europe and brought back a skilled mechanic to build cotton machinery. They built the second carpet mill in this country, and made thread lace.

Dr. Oliver Dean was another cotton manufacturer, who ran the Medway Village mill at one time, and he and George Barber built the great Cary house together, at the corner of Barber and Village Streets. Dr. Dean became later the superintendent of the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester, N. H., and he was the liberal founder of Dean Academy in Franklin. He gave away \$400,000 in his lifetime, and endowed the Universalist Church there. Mr. Barber lived to be eighty-eight years old.

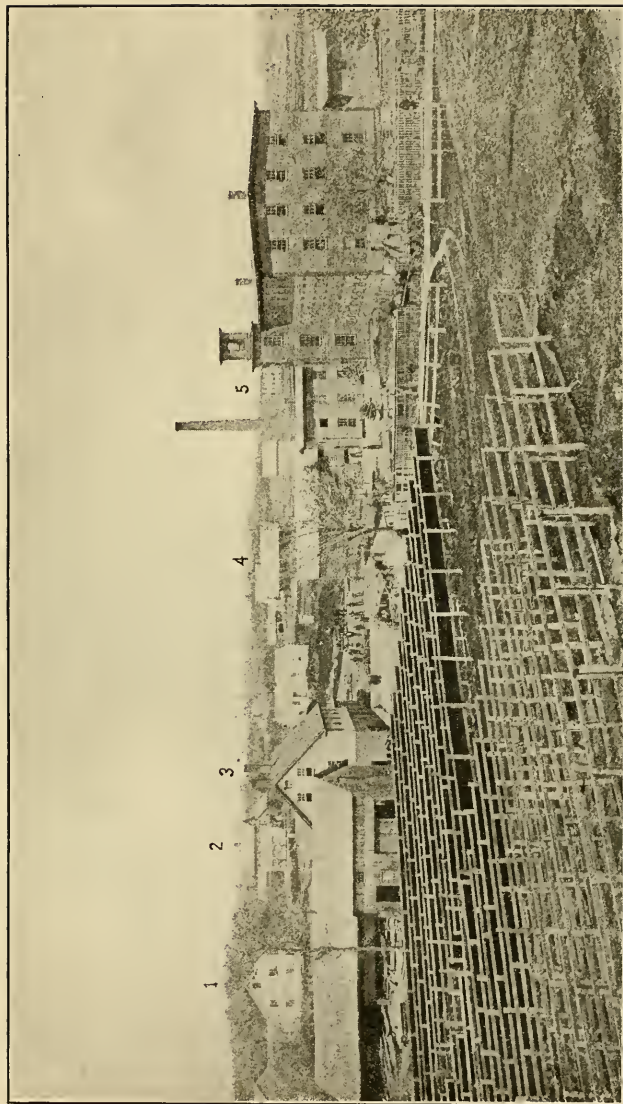
One of his nephews was Milton H. Sanford, whose father is said to have made in Medway the first cotton thread in America. He took up his father's business at his death, when only seventeen years old, and was a very prosperous manufacturer for fifty years.

George Barber's daughter Harriet married William White in 1830, the year in which he bought the Caryville mill. After his death she married William H. Cary in 1854, who had bought the same mill of her father in 1848. He came from Attleboro to Medway with his father in 1818, one of eleven children, and began to work in the office of William Felt & Company, cotton manufacturers, in Medway. After three years in a store he was their agent for fourteen years, till they were burned out. He rebuilt and enlarged the Caryville mill and built three tenement houses there. After selling it he rebuilt the Eagle Mill,

Wrentham, and then bought the Rockville Mill for thread, yarn and sheetings. This he sold in 1871. He was in business for sixty years, and for over thirty years he produced annually from \$75,000 to \$100,000 worth of goods. He managed a larger property than any one else in Medway. He was chairman of a committee to grade the Air Line Railroad from Dover to Woonsocket. He was well and strong at eighty. He owned the Caryville mill for sixteen years, and when the post office was opened there in 1866 it was named for him.

In 1867 Mr. Ray sold the property of eighteen acres to Moses Taft of Uxbridge for \$30,000. He was born there in 1812, near the first woolen mill in town. His father, Luke, the fifth from Robert Taft of Mendon in 1680, set up a spinning jenny of twenty spindles in his own house in 1816, and Moses wound bobbins at seven years of age. In 1824 his father started a mill of twenty power looms and made satinets. The son worked there while he went to school, and took charge of it at eighteen. After the hard times in 1837 he paid all his debts. He owned mills in Burrillville, Uxbridge, Blackstone, Douglas, Ashland, Putnam, etc.

In 1871 Moses Taft sold one-third of the property to C. H. Cutler for \$11,000. Cotton cloth had always been made up to this time, and satinet since then. Mr. Cutler was born in Ashland in 1834. He worked first in his father's gristmill, and then at Uxbridge and Milford. In 1864 he was superintendent at the South Milford mill of Thayer & Sweet. Among his papers is one that says: "Feb 25 1864 South Milford. We have this day agreed to make domet flannels as we have been doing for Moses Taft, he finding wool and warps. Aldrich & Cutler." Mr. Aldrich was then superintendent at Caryville. Soon after this the two men exchanged places, and



THE CARYVILLE MILL ABOUT 1870 WITH THE TENTER BARS FOR STRETCHING
AND DRYING CLOTH

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1 Jonas Fairbanks | 2 C. H. Cutler | 3 Old Sawmill | 4 Calvin Fairbanks | 5 Boot Shop |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|

the South Milford mill burned in 1868. Mr. Cutler was a just and kind employer, and a good citizen, well liked by all who knew him. In 1876 he began to have a cough, and on this account in 1878 he moved to Colorado Springs. There he bought a house and was planning to start a grocery business with his son-in-law, when he died. The Caryville mill property was assessed in 1879 at \$33,150.

Mr. Cutler's successor as superintendent was William A. McKean, who lived here from 1868 to 1899. In 1885 Moses Taft's grandson Edgar Murdock bought some of the stock of Taft, McKean & Company. Addison E. Bullard bought his first stock in 1880. He had entered the office as bookkeeper in 1875. The other owners were then Moses Taft, Herbert Taft and William A. McKean. In 1889 the mill had seven sets of machinery.

In 1899 the owners were Taft, Murdock and Bullard. When Mr. Murdock died the others bought his stock, and in 1904 they were incorporated with the name of the Taft Woolen Company.

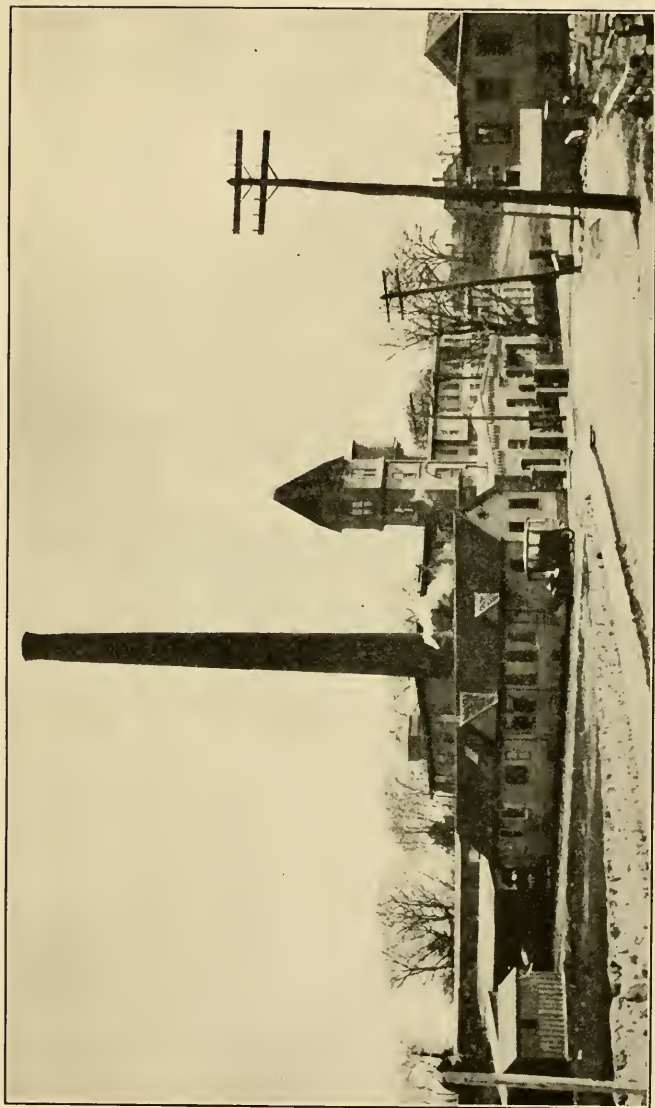
Of the present company Harold W. Bullard is president and superintendent, and Addison E. Bullard is treasurer, with a controlling interest. The capital is \$220,000. There are nine pickers, fourteen sets of cards, one hundred and eighty-four narrow looms and three thousand four hundred and thirty-two spindles. Three steam boilers and a water wheel of seventy-five horse power were lately used, but in 1818 the mechanical power was changed to a five hundred horse power electric generator, with the equipment for buying as much more current from the Edison Company. The company owns thirty-eight tenements and employs two hundred and sixty persons. It made in 1918 two million three hundred and ninety thousand nine hundred and

fourteen yards of Union Cassimeres and Satinets. During the recent war three hundred persons were at work, the mill was run at night, and it spun forty-three thousand one hundred and forty pounds of silk yarn for cartridge bags.

THE RED MILL

Cotton or woolen manufacture was begun where the Red Mill stood, at the next water privilege on Charles River above the North Bellingham mill, probably in 1852. There had been a dam there for over fifty years, for Laban Bates sold Dr. John Corbett in 1783 two lots on Charles River with the right to erect a dam across it where the old sawmill dam was, and keep the water up to a certain stone. In 1800 Amos Ellis sold to David Jones the right to flow his land to make a pond, and a half acre for a mill yard. In 1832 for \$450 Simeon Barney sold to Henry C. Lillie, a member of Adin Ballou's Hopedale Community and the superintendent of its manufacturing department, this property, inherited by his wife Mary from David Jones, with the flowage rights granted by Amos Ellis in 1800. In the same year Thompson Thayer sold to Dwight Colburn for \$2250 about five acres with a saw and gristmill on the new road over Charles River and an acre on the south side of it, referring to the deed of Bates to Corbett in 1783. Thayer had bought a mortgage on the property some time before, and foreclosed it. The next year Lillie sold what he had bought of Barney to Colburn for \$522. Mr. Colburn bought nine acres of Elias Cook the next year for \$650, seventy acres the next year from Martin Rockwood for \$1400, and sixty-seven acres the year after from David Foster for \$1800. He manufactured woolens and once had sixty hands.

Dwight Colburn was born in Dedham, 1798, and



THE CARYVILLE MILL IN 1919

died in 1874. He worked in boyhood in a mill of his father's, and continued the business for himself in Holliston and at the Red Mill. He was engaged in boot manufacture also, in Bellingham and Milford, where his sons were prominent in the same line. In religious convictions he was a follower of Adin Ballou. His granddaughter has been the Bellingham Town Librarian for twelve years.

Mr. Colburn owned the water privilege at Box Pond also for some years, and when he sold it finally in 1839, he reserved the right of flowage for his mill below on the same river. Soon after the hard times in 1837 he went to Milford, and in 1841 he sold to Bates & Arnold, owners of the North Bellingham mill, his stone cotton factory with all the property connected, for \$2500. They owned both mills for twenty years, till 1860, when these went to their creditors, Newell & Daniels.

The next year Newell & Daniels sold to F. B. Ray the Colburn privilege, reserving the lower Bates & Arnold cotton mill with the rights belonging to its pond and to the Beaver Pond water that flowed into it, for \$2250. In 1887 Joseph G. Ray sold to the Norfolk Woolen Company the Colburn privilege deeded by Dwight Colburn to Bates & Arnold in 1841, subject to a mortgage from F. B. Ray to J. G. Ray given in 1868, for \$3000.

Rags were prepared to make feltings here for many years.

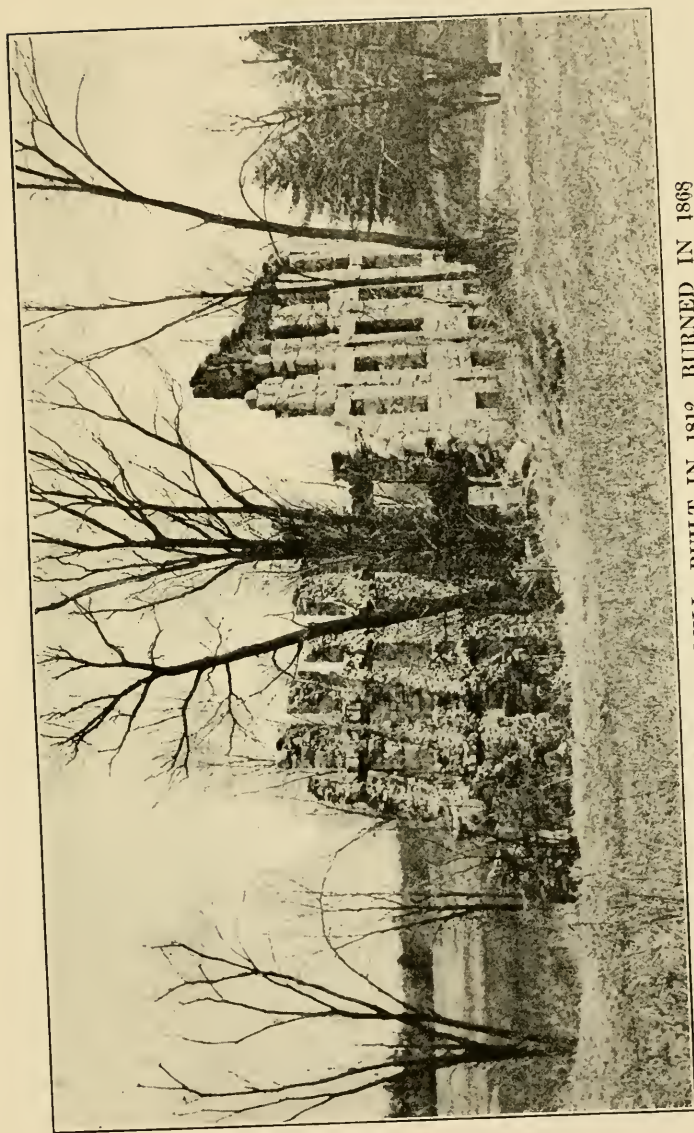
THE SOUTH MILFORD FACTORY

Dr. John Corbett asked the town for permission to build a dam and sawmill here in 1755, and was refused; the first mill in Mendon, then almost one hundred years old already, was on the same road hardly a mile away. But his great grandson, the third Dr. Scammell, sold to Pen-

niman, Scammell & Company in 1812 for \$1200 land on both sides of the turnpike from Mendon to Boston and on both sides of Charles River "for a manufactory now building" together with the right to flow his land, to keep the pond two feet higher than the sills of the factory. The firm consisted of eleven persons, with Maj. Samuel Penniman at its head. He was the son of Landlord Samuel Penniman who kept the tavern opposite the Green Store at South Milford. It was licensed in 1778. He was born in 1717, had three wives, and died in 1807. Maj. Samuel Penniman was born in 1773 and died in 1845. Besides his woolen business here he collected straw braid for miles around in all directions and made bonnets.

"The Bellingham woolen and cotton manufactory" is mentioned in a history of this industry as one of the earliest to be incorporated by the State. This was done in 1814, and its capital was fixed at \$15,000. Its agent in 1824 was Amos Hill. A sale of its shares in 1823 indicated a value of \$8000, and another in 1827 of \$10,300.

In 1831 the company mortgaged its stone factory, brick dyehouse, weaving and storehouse, carpenter shop, etc., with the land, to Armsby & Witherell of Boston for \$3000, with an agreement to sell them three-fourths of all its products. The agent in 1836 was Mr. Holbrook. In 1837 the mill had two sets of machinery, and made twenty-four thousand yards annually, worth \$62,000. Not long after the panic of that year, in 1840, Moses Whiting of Milton got a judgment against the company of \$25,937. There were then four dwelling houses besides the factory and other buildings. Mr. Whiting kept the mill nearly twenty years, and sold it in 1859 to Chilson & Fisk of Milford for \$4000, who sold it again the next year to Thayer & Sweet of Hopkinton for \$3000. In 1864 they made domet flannels for Moses Taft, and he



THE SOUTH MILFORD MILL, BUILT IN 1812, BURNED IN 1868

furnished wool and warps. Mr. Cutler was the agent here then, and he exchanged places with the Caryville agent, Mr. Aldrich. The mill was burned in 1868. In 1881 W. A. McKean of Caryville bought the land and remaining houses for \$3250. In 1893 he sold it to the Seaberg Manufacturing Company, but it was not used, and passed to Taft, Murdock & Bullard of the Caryville mill in 1895.

The pond is called Factory Pond on old maps; it is full of water yet, the dam is good, and the three-story stone factory still stands with about half of its walls left and two good-sized elm trees towering up from within them, a remarkable ruin after fifty years.

THE CHILSON FACTORY

Besides the four textile mills on Charles River there was a small cotton factory at Hoag Lake on Peter's River, where the same family had lived since 1699, when William Chilson bought three cow common rights in the land bounded north by Charles River and south by Attleboro and the Pawtucket (Blackstone) River. Martin Chilson employed twelve persons here at one time, and when he drove a span of horses to Providence, the neighbors thought it must cost him as much as \$2 a day. In 1828 he gave a mortgage for \$2500 on twenty-five acres with his "cotton factory mill," machinery, etc. The end of the story came in 1834, when he surrendered to Rila Scott and Paul Chilson as trustees for a number of creditors, two houses, two barns, the cotton house, blacksmith shop, shed, etc., with about ninety acres where he lived, with the water power and all his personal property, fire engine, two horses, chaise, broad cloths, calicoes, W. I. goods in his store, unfinished wagons, hay, tools, furniture,

etc., together with the claim on the American Insurance Company for the fire in his factory.

THE BOOT BUSINESS

In 1793 Col. Ariel Bragg at Hayden Row began to make shoes with forty pounds of leather and four calfskins. He made twenty-two pairs, carried them to Providence and sold them for \$21.50. Many men took up the same work in towns in this vicinity. In 1828 a two-horse baggage wagon went from Milford to Boston twice a week; in 1874 six hundred persons produced a million dollars' worth there. The first boot factory at Medway Village was started by Clark Partridge in 1837.

Edwin and William Fairbanks of Caryville learned the business at Hayden Row, and began it in a shop on their father's place in 1848. They built a shop midway between their own houses about 1851. After Edwin sold out to his brother and moved to Cambridge in 1864, William moved it to where the house of Charles Fisher is now, and built an addition making it one hundred and twenty feet long. About ninety men were employed, and made heavy boots for the army and for miners in the West. Work was given out to be done by men at their homes, and finished here. It went to all the surrounding towns. Seven thousand cases of twelve pairs each were produced in a year. Mr. Fairbanks died in 1875, a man liked well by all who knew him. Dr. Ide's son wrote of him, "His life among us has given emphatic proof that a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." The boot shop was burned the next year after his death, with a loss estimated at \$100,000, and the business was never begun here again. In 1864 more men in town worked on boots than in any other occupation.

Dwight Colburn had a smaller boot shop at South Milford, William Paine one at Crooks' Corner, and there were others at the center of the town where a few neighbors worked together.

Agricultural tools were made by Jerald O. Wilcox, 1800-1891, who settled in Rakeville in 1848. He began to make rakes and forks at twenty-seven years of age, and his business came to include cards for woolen mills and many farming tools, and his customers were found in many countries. His product in one year was \$18,000, and he employed about twenty men.

Before Mr. Wilcox came to Rakeville it is said that revolving pistols were made near there by Benjamin and Barton B. Darling. There were six iron furnaces in New England in 1731, and guns were made in Boston in 1740. Joseph Fairbanks had a trip hammer shop at Caryville in 1813, where he probably used ore from the iron mine in Mine Woods between North Bellingham and the Center. As early as 1737 John Metcalf sold one-twentieth of one hundred acres in Bellingham, one-twentieth of the iron ore in it and one-twentieth of a mine on land of John Bartlet. Bog ore from the North Bellingham mine was used at Taunton for making locomotives, but not later than 1860. A whetstone quarry near the Franklin line was worked for some years. About forty years ago Harvey Grant built rowboats in the south part of the town. Adams Barber, Jr., had a small tannery on Peter's River at Crooks' Corner.

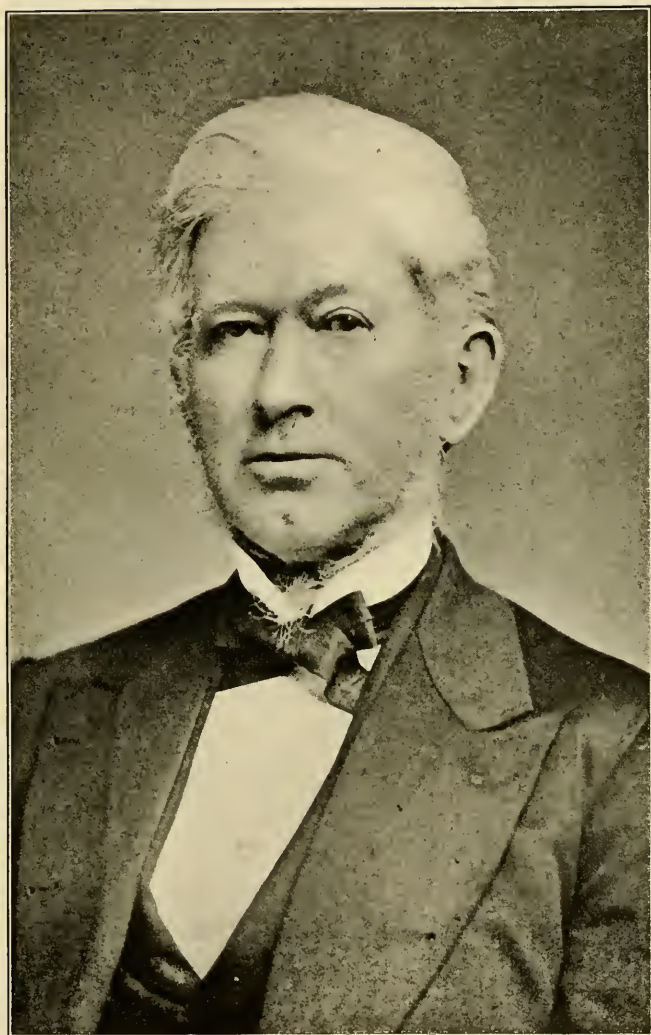
CHAPTER XI

THE CHURCHES, 1819-1919

THE town had voted to buy a pew in the meeting house for the use of the new minister, Rev. Abial Fisher, when he came, and his service began with good prospects of success. In 1822 he preached two Century Sermons which were published together, with this explanation: "When a century had passed after the incorporation of this town, a design was formed to exhibit the outlines of its history; but Providence prevented the execution." The first gives the history of the town, the second the lives of the four Baptist ministers.

There had been some disagreement in the church about the singing, even in Mr. Alden's time, but no open quarrel. The organ which the town had put into the meeting house had improved the singing, but one of the deacons, a member of the choir, now objected to it. The record says: "A solemn sadness overspread the pious breast, and Zion decked herself in ashes." He insisted that the church should vote on his proposition that the Bible does not allow such an instrument of worship, and the vote was against him. He then began to stay away from the services, and was excluded from membership for continued absence. The clerk, one of the same family, was treated in the same way.

Seven or eight years later the deacon who had led in the discipline of this one, followed the same path himself. He first refused to pay his share of the expense of



Joseph T. Mafsey

1808—1891

a singing school maintained by the church. The pastor rashly remarked that he considered it as bad to refuse to support public worship as to drink too much rum. He apologized for this, but the quarrel grew till eight members left the church, including another deacon. The one who began the trouble left town saying that "he would get out of Bellingham, something that the devil never did."

Besides these troubles Mr. Fisher had others even greater. The Baptist Church never included more than a minority of the town, and probably his temperament was not well suited to his trying position here. In February, 1821, thirty-two persons signed an agreement to form a new religious society of the Congregational denomination, adopted rules and elected officers, and twenty-seven men subscribed \$59 for their purpose.

There was also a Universalist society which usually met in the south part of the town. About 1750, some of the South End people joined the Six Principle Baptist Church of Elder Josiah Cook in Cumberland, later became Universalists and seceded from it, and built a meeting house of their own, which remained unfinished. Stephen Metcalf's map of Bellingham in 1794 shows the "Universal Meeting House." It was later used by Wright Curtis for a tavern. The Universalist Church of Woonsocket was formed in 1829.

In May 1821 the town chose a committee of nine men representing the three societies to report whether the meeting house was the town's property and who should use it. They found that it belonged to the inhabitants of Bellingham and that "six years ago (before Mr. Fisher came) there was but one society in town, all meeting in the same house together for religious worship, attending on the same preaching although somewhat different in sentiments, yet social, friendly and liberal feelings were inculcated.

Now there are three societies all wishing to meet in the same house but not at the same time, nor hear the same preaching, no there is a retarder, uncharitable sentiments are inculcated, old friends are alienated, one fears another, hard feelings are excited, which renders it unpleasant, and shows the need of some compromise." They proposed that each society should use the house for a part of the time, till all are willing to meet together. The town accepted this report and voted that the Universalist and Congregational societies might use the house on the third and fourth Sundays of each month, and the Baptists on the other Sundays.

The immediate cause of this action had come the month before, when Eliab Wight and John Bates, two members of the Baptist Society's prudential committee, on a Sunday, instead of getting the key from the selectmen, broke open the front door in order to hold their service. Besides this vote in town meeting, the town sued Wight and Bates for trespass. The case reached the Supreme Court in 1823 and the decision came the next year, nearly three years after the deed. The Baptists had to pay five dollars for trespass, one hundred and seventy-seven dollars for costs, and their expenses in all amounted to about six hundred dollars. The record of the case in the highest court fills about fifteen pages. The relation of the town and the church was so close and so little understood that even the witnesses from the ten men who built the building did not agree whether it belonged to the town or the Baptists.

Meanwhile both Universalists and Congregationalists were trying to establish themselves. The former had been meeting at the distant South End, but wanted to use the meeting house. By the advice of their leader and friend, Adin Ballou of Hopedale, they met now in

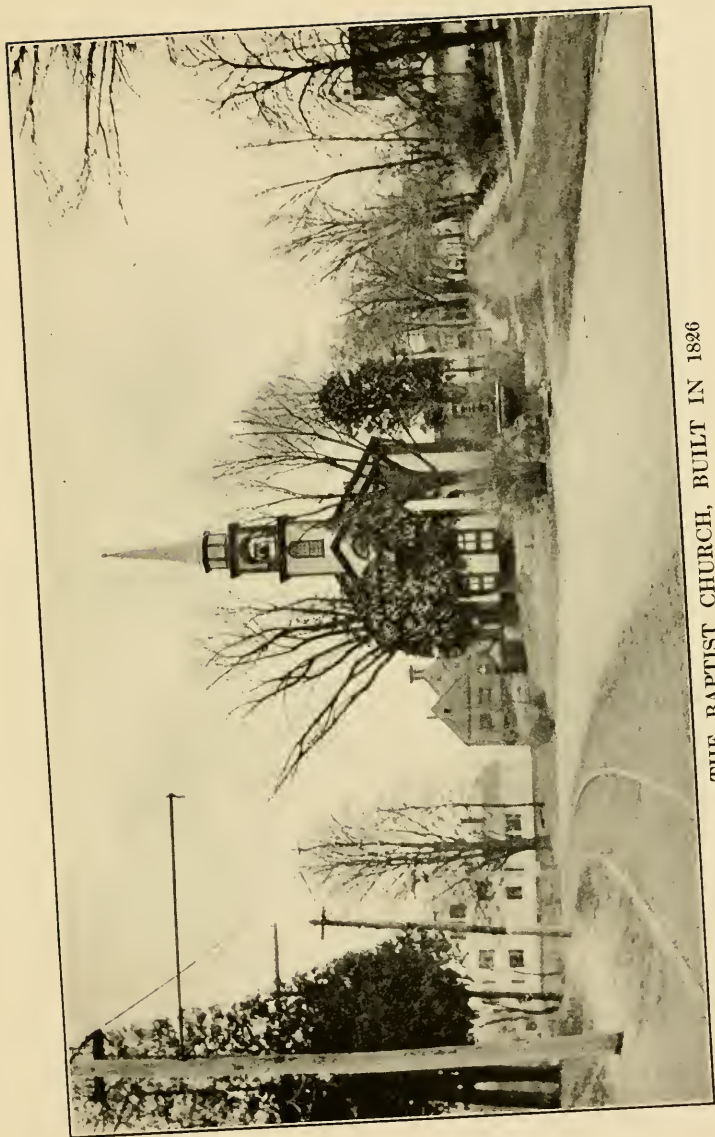
the tavern opposite. In 1823 on the third Sunday in April, when the Universalists could use the building by the town's vote, Mr. Fisher preached from the steps to a crowd of Baptists in both forenoon and afternoon, while the others used the tavern. A month later one of the Baptists got into the building by a window on Saturday night, and unlocked both the entry door and the outside door. Mr. Foster, the tavern keeper, who had the key, dreamed three times that this was done, and then took his lantern, found the doors unlocked and put up a bar and a new lock. The Baptists held their morning service at the steps and the Universalists in the tavern as before. But at noon some of the Baptists told the other party that they might hold their afternoon service inside. When the selectmen opened the doors, Mr. Fisher with a crowd of his people rushed in. Mr. Ballou asked the selectmen not to open the inner door, and then asked Mr. Fisher to explain his action. He replied that the town had not a right to this house and could not grant its use to the Universalists. Some of his people proposed to retire, but he and others stayed. While Mr. Ballou and the selectmen walked up the main aisle, towards the pulpit, Mr. Fisher rushed up a side aisle, ran up the stairs and said: "Let us begin the worship of God by singing." His people began to sing and Mr. Ballou and his party went back to the tavern. He wrote a pamphlet about the contest, "The Furious Priest Reproved." In his autobiography he says: "I can see nothing to be ashamed of. I said, 'Let the doors be opened and if Mr. Fisher does not conduct himself decently, I certainly shall, and I will publish his doings to the world.' Mr. Fisher lost the respect of people generally."

Adin Ballou, 1803-1890, of Cumberland, became a Universalist at the age of twenty, and had to leave both

his church and his home on that account. He preached in Milford, Mendon and Hopedale till 1880, and was the head of the famous Hopedale Community, the "Practical Christian Republic," which lasted from 1842 to 1856. He wrote many religious books and others, among them a large history of Milford. His preaching continued nearly sixty-nine years, and he served occasionally in all the towns of this vicinity. He married one thousand one hundred and ninety-nine couples and attended about two thousand funerals. He declaimed against slavery and war and was called "a restorationist, communist, spiritualist, pacifist, one of the most remarkable souls that New England has produced."

In 1823 the Congregationalists voted to meet in common with the other societies till the lawsuit was settled. The next year they voted to unite with the Universalists and become a legal parish. By a special act the Legislature appointed a Justice to call a parish meeting, which was held in 1825. A committee reported to this meeting that "they might support a minister if united with concessions on a man who would lament the divisions that prevail in this place," and would suggest methods of "restoring peace and harmony in this distracted region. Such a man is not in this place at present, and we believe that the good of society now calls for a vote of the parish excluding the Rev. Abial Fisher from any privilege in this house as a preacher except by permission of this committee on an extraordinary occasion. We do not wish to exclude the Baptists from this house, but urge them to join us in procuring a minister of the kind described. If they do so, we think it would be more likely to settle a Baptist than a man of any other belief."

The Baptists did not join them, but stood by their pastor. The others voted to call Rev. David Newman,



THE BAPTIST CHURCH, BUILT IN 1826

and a year later to thank him, "as it is not probable that we shall be able to support him any longer." This was the end of the revived town church.

Meanwhile the Baptists were busy. Mr. Fisher himself gave \$70 from his \$350 salary for a new Baptist meeting house, and was chairman of the building committee. Subscriptions of from \$5 to \$150 were raised in town, and others throughout the State, and in January, 1826, the contract for the building above the foundation was given for \$2600 to Malachi and Appleton Bullard of Medway. Besides the subscriptions paid, \$625 was received from the sale of pews. The church was dedicated in November, to be held by trustees always to be Baptists. Mr. Fisher appeared to have a stroke of paralysis the next year, from which he recovered, but he left town soon after. His pastorate was stormy, but the church grew, in spite of its losses. In a time of great interest in 1821 and 1822 he baptized forty-five persons, and the members increased in his time from forty to ninety-six.

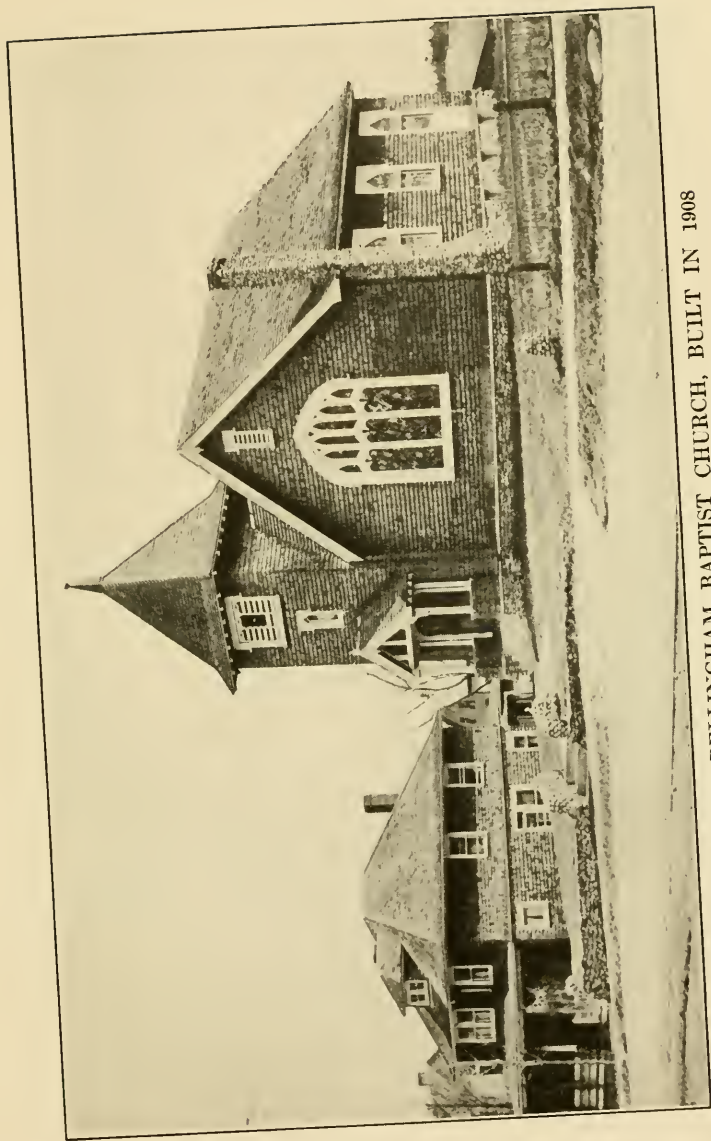
After leaving Bellingham Mr. Fisher preached at West Boylston for three years, and then went to Webster in 1832. He was considered there a good preacher and a good manager of church finances, but "expectations were disappointed," and he stayed only a year and a half. After serving several other churches he retired to a farm at West Boylston, where he died in 1862.

In 1828 Rev. Calvin Newton began an active and successful ministry here of three years. He left to become a professor in Colby College, Maine.

In 1834 Rev. Joseph T. Massey began his remarkable pastorate. He was born in Virginia in 1808, but graduated at the Newton Theological Seminary, and was ordained in Bellingham. After six years here he went

back to that State for seven years, as a pastor and a missionary, but then he returned here again. During his absence Rev. Nehemiah G. Lovell was the pastor. The church increased from one hundred and forty-one to one hundred and seventy-four members, its largest number. He was a conscientious and scholarly man, rather sensitive in his disposition. He went from here to the Baptist Church at North Attleboro. For Mr. Massey the church built a parsonage. His second pastorate lasted till 1880, so that he served here in all thirty-nine years. The Sunday after the assassination of President Lincoln he happened to exchange pulpits with Dr. Ide of the West Parish, and he did not refer to the great event that every one was thinking of. As a Virginian he preferred not to talk publicly about the war. But besides being the longest, his ministry was doubtless one of the best liked in this town, as the people chose him for their highest offices so many times. He was town treasurer in 1859-1868, and even both treasurer and clerk in 1870-1879. He had only two children, who died young. He died in Virginia after preaching eleven years more, in 1891 at the age of eighty-three. The Centre school was named for him when the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church was observed in 1887, and sixty-three of the seventy-six members were present, Mr. Massey came, and gave the historical address. The names of eight pastors were commemorated.

In 1881 Rev. Daniel A. Wade began a pastorate of nine years. Edwin F. Mitchell was here from 1890 to 1892, and the church was altered and repaired then. Rev. Lucian Drury served from 1892 to 1897. At that time the church had sixty-six members. Then came an interval of supply by theological students, among them S. S. Huse, 1893, J. P. Berkley, 1897, and 1898, C. L.



THE NORTH BELLINGHAM BAPTIST CHURCH, BUILT IN 1908

Chamberlain, 1909 and 1910. Mrs. Harriet Littlefield left the church \$1000 in 1907. Rev. W. W. Wakeman was the next settled minister, from 1910 to 1916, when he went to Westwood. The church had then sixty-eight members. His successor was Rev. Adolph Aubert till this year, when Mrs. Emma J. C. Park came from North Reading to take his place.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT NORTH BELLINGHAM

This church is seventy-two years old. The mill here was owned for twenty years by Bates & Arnold, and Mr. Bates was a deacon in the First Baptist Church of Providence. In October, 1847, they dedicated a hall for use as a chapel, containing thirty-five pews, of which twenty-nine were let at once. Every year since then has been recorded, except the war time, 1862-1866. That firm failed then, and Hiram Whiting became Mr. Arnold's successor as superintendent of the mill in 1867. The next year the congregation became a Baptist Church, duly recognized by a council of seven churches. Its preachers have usually been either students from the Newton Baptist Theological Seminary or the Baptist pastor from the center of the town, but in 1882 Rev. E. D. Bowers was settled here for two years. After the two years' service of Rev. L. J. Brace their present building was dedicated in 1908, costing about \$4500. There were twenty-seven members in 1917.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

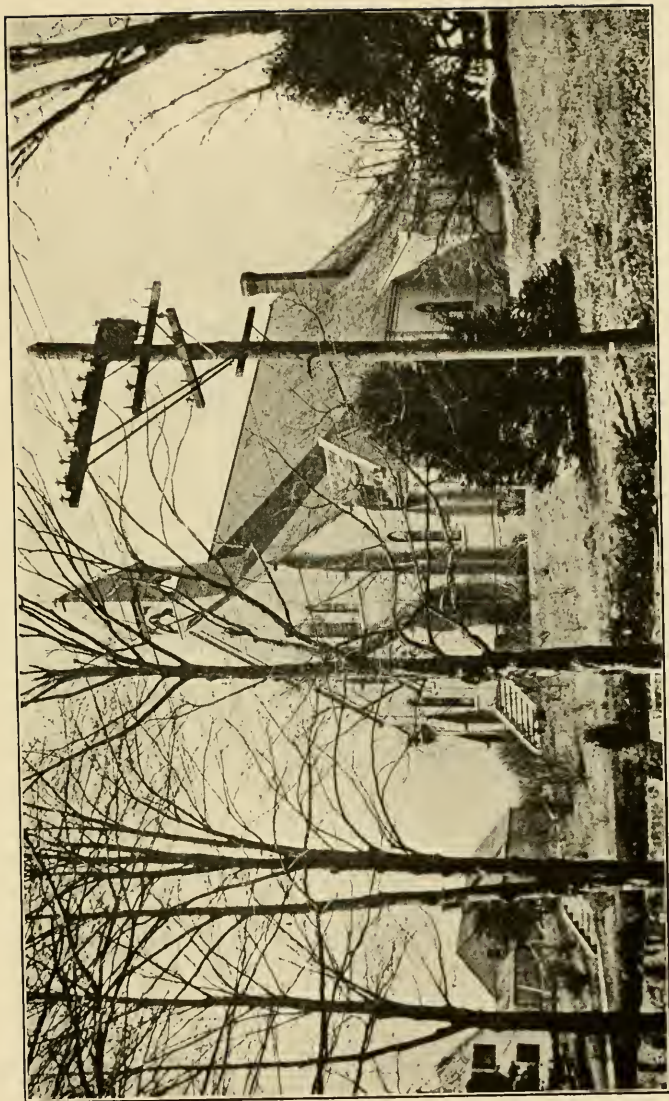
A history of the Catholic Church in New England states that there were probably less than two hundred Catholics in Massachusetts in 1780, seven hundred and twenty in Boston in 1810, and about a dozen in Milford in 1832. These went first to Boston and later to Woonsocket for marriages and baptisms, and to Blackstone for burials. The first mass in Milford was said in a house, 1836, and about a dozen persons heard it. When the railroad from Framingham to Milford was built in 1848, many Irish laborers came, and the first Catholic Church in Milford was built then.

In Bellingham before 1850 fourteen persons with apparently Irish names were married, six births were registered and five deaths. The record is of little value, because it is known to be incomplete. The Catholics of the north part of the town at first had to go to churches of their faith on the east, north, and west, at Franklin, Medway and Milford.

The Franklin parish belonged to Attleborough till 1877, but the people bought the old meeting house of Dr. Emmons in 1871, built in 1788 for \$3514.86. It was now called St. Mary's Church. Only a few persons from our town went to Franklin and not for long.

The Milford Church, where most of our Catholics went till about 1870, received a strong man as pastor in 1857, when Rev. Patrick Cuddihy came, from Berkshire County, where he had built several churches. He was a priest for sixty-six years, and active till over ninety years old. His great parish included Hopkinton, Holliston, Ashland, Westborough, Upton and Medway, till 1866, when Ashland, Hopkinton and Westborough were set off from it.

In Medway the Catholic people used to meet at the



ST. BRENDAN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, BUILT IN 1895

house of Walter Dewire in 1850, and in 1857 with John Kenney, when Father Cuddihy came to them. Their present church lot was bought in 1863, and it is said that "St. Clare's Parish" was organized in 1864. In 1870 Holliston became an independent parish with Medway for its mission, and here was the church home of the Bellingham Catholics. Rev. Richard J. Quinlan was in charge, and he built the basement and most of the superstructure of the Medway church, which was first occupied in 1877. In 1885 Rev. M. T. Boylan came to the new parish of Medway, and the building, seating six hundred persons, was completed and dedicated the next year. He was educated at Montreal, ordained in 1874, and came here from Cambridge.

When he went away to Charlestown in 1888, Rev. Thomas B. Lowney took his place. He was born in 1846, studied in Montreal, and served in Natick, Weymouth, Chelsea and Boston before coming to Medway. North Bellingham was his mission, and he built St. Brendan's Church here. In 1896 he went away to Marlboro, and was succeeded in Medway by Rev. D. J. Keleher, Professor of Science at St. John's Seminary, till 1906. Father Dewire served there from 1906 to 1910. Rev. Martin J. Lee has been the rector at Medway since then, and Rev. Joseph Reardon has been the curate since 1898.

St. Brendan's Church, which still belongs to the Medway parish, stands on the Pelatiah Smith estate, where for many years the Catholics who lived in the old tavern building used to meet on Sundays to say the rosary when they did not go to Milford. The first service was held in it September 8, 1895, when the building was consecrated to divine worship. It seats four hundred persons.

St. Brendan was an abbot in Ireland who ruled over three thousand monks in several monasteries, and died 1340 years ago. He lived where the first civilized men came to Ireland from Spain about a thousand years before Christ, and had a church on Brandon Mountain near the mouth of the River Shannon, where he loved to gaze out over the western sea. Soon after he was ordained by Bishop Erc, who died in the year 512, he prayed for some place of retirement, far away from men. He dreamed that an angel promised him a beautiful island, and soon a hermit came and told him with tears of excitement of one where he had been, "the land of promise of the Saints, where no night ever came, for Jesus Christ was the light thereof," and where people lived without food and drink. His heart was kindled by the tale, and with chosen monks he sailed away and was gone for seven years and saw whales, icebergs, volcanoes and many other great marvels, and "things that are not and never were." This tale is found in ancient manuscripts in the Latin, French, English, Saxon, Flemish, Irish, Welsh, Breton and Scottish Gaelic languages, with many wonderful variations. St. Brendan's Island is found on most of the maps of the time of Columbus. In 1521 an expedition from the Canary Islands searched for it, and again in 1570, when over a hundred persons testified that they had seen it from a distance. In 1605 another ship was sent in vain, and again another in 1721. The many reported appearances are now explained as the effects of mirage of the clouds upon the water.

It may be that the Saint discovered far more than an island that no one else could find. Some of the manuscripts say that after a five-year missionary voyage to islands towards the north, he started on his seven-year voyage in a larger ship, built for the purpose, with

sixty men. The date of this sailing was observed for some centuries as a memorable event in the history of the church. He came to a land where he could find no limits in forty days' travel, and saw a large river flowing from east to west which he could not cross. This land has been called North America, and the river the Ohio. When Cortez came to Mexico in 1519, he found traditions of a white man who had come across the ocean long ago from the northeast in a boat with "wings" like the sails of the Spaniards, who remained seven years and taught a humane religion. "The envious tooth of time" prevents our knowing surely whether "those happy plains of Paradise in that great western land" were in our own country, visited by St. Brendan more than nine centuries before Columbus came.

CHAPTER XII

TOWN AFFAIRS, 1819-1919

IN 1822 Mr. Fisher preached his two Century Sermons, and the town is fortunate in having this printed record of its first century.

In 1823 Pelatiah Smith, the tavern keeper, carried a negro traveler to Holliston, who became sick there and was cared for at the town's expense. Mr. Smith refused to bring him back to Bellingham, and was sued by the town of Holliston, losing in fine and expenses \$200. Our town allowed him \$75 towards his loss.

Many times in our history it has been proposed to change our boundaries, besides the long continued waverings in the Wrentham line and in the State line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In 1730 a part of Mendon was declined, and afterwards invited to join us in vain. The West Parish of Medway, incorporated for church purposes only, could easily become a town by itself, as was proposed in 1807, and the people of the four towns to which it belonged were asked in 1816 to state their reasons both for and against that change. The agitation for it increased for several years, and in 1824 thirty-two men of Medway, eleven of Holliston, five of Franklin and eight of Bellingham raised \$360 to accomplish it. Bellingham voted against it fifty-eight to twelve, and the next year seventy-three to twelve. The town would lose an eighth of its land, a seventh of its valuation and more than a sixth of its inhabitants.

The petition was refused by the Legislature. The proposal was renewed about thirty years ago, and discussed in the local newspapers, but it interested only a few persons at that time.

In 1825 Major Cook kept a tavern at the Centre, and Wright Curtis at the South End.

In 1830 the town voted "to put . . . Esq and his wife out to any suitable lowest bidder," and to sue his son unless he paid for half of their support. Perhaps this sad case led to the purchase of the town farm the next year. Seth Holbrook received \$3500 for one hundred and fifty-five acres, with buildings, four cows, oxen, etc. Twenty paupers went there, but only eight were left the next year. The farm sold butter, straw braid, calves, lambs, etc., amounting to \$130, and \$50 worth of wood. The net expense was a little over \$400 a year. This same farm has been run by the town for eighty-eight years.

In 1832 it was voted to do all town business annually at the March meeting only.

Even as late as 1833 "cattle & horses shall not run at large on the highways."

In 1835 the school bank money had probably been used to help pay for the town farm, but the school appropriation was \$600 and \$25 "interest" on that fund. The town had lately changed its plan again to one general school committee instead of district committees. Highways required \$600 this year, besides \$100 for bridges, one over Peter's River to be made of stone.

In 1836 the town spent \$250 on inoculation for small-pox, and built a temporary hospital at the town farm.

In 1840 the town voted that the selectmen should visit all manufacturing establishments and remove anything injurious to health. The third story of the town

house porch was finished off for an armory. The town has always taken a notable interest in military matters.

The school report for 1841 showed nine schools with two hundred and seventy-three pupils in winter and two hundred and fifteen in summer. The teachers received their board in their districts, estimated at \$6.75 for men and \$5.20 for women a month, not a week, and \$15.85 a month salary for men and \$7 for women besides. The school bank money was called \$418. The wage for work on the highway was ten cents an hour.

The south part of the town was immensely excited in 1842 by the strange civil war in Rhode Island. The charter of that colony, which was granted by King Charles II of England in 1663, gave the Colonial Assembly the right to admit as voters "such persons as they shall think fit." When the colonies became independent of British authority by the Revolution, instead of establishing a new and more just government for the new State like the others, Rhode Island strangely kept the King's charter as its constitution. In colonial times only landowners could be voters as a matter of course, and this restriction still remained in force, so that in 1840 of over twenty-two thousand adult males only nine thousand five hundred and ninety were freemen; Providence with twenty-three thousand people had only one thousand six hundred and ten voters, but Smithfield and Cumberland, including Woonsocket, with three thousand, had four hundred and fifty voters. Generally the north part of the State fared worse than the south, because all the men of the south part owned land, since they were farmers. Besides this injustice, towns were not represented in the Assembly in proportion to their population, but by an arbitrary rule, perhaps reasonable once, which had remained unchanged for nearly one

hundred and fifty years. Providence County, the northern half of the State in area, with fifty-eight thousand seventy-three population against fifty-four thousand five hundred in the rest of the State, had only twenty-two of the seventy-two representatives in the Assembly. The country voters of the small towns whose power was thus out of all proportion to their number, had always prevented any reform, both in suffrage and in representation. For want of a proper constitution the people of Rhode Island had suffered more than two generations, from fundamental laws long ago outgrown and plainly unjust.

In 1824 a constitution was presented to the voters which gave fair representation but still restricted voting to landowners; the city of Providence voted six hundred and fifty Yes to twenty-six No, Cumberland and Smithfield two hundred and sixty-eight Yes to thirty-two No, but the constitution was rejected by a vote in the State of two to one. In 1834 a constitutional convention controlled by conservatives adjourned finally for lack of a quorum. So after years of agitation and discouragement the suffrage party decided in 1841 to hold a State convention and adopt a constitution by popular vote without legislative authority, and then ask recognition from the United States government instead of that tyrannical State government, which had always been able to prevent its own reform.

Although the legislature now called a constitutional convention, this People's Convention on January 12, 1842, without waiting for the report of the legal convention due a month later, declared that their own constitution had been adopted by thirteen thousand one hundred and sixty-four votes in an adult male population of twenty-three thousand. Both the voting and the counting of the

votes were done without any authority, and the result was only the report of voluntary members of the suffrage party. The *Providence Journal* said that some of the votes in Cumberland were cast by Massachusetts men. Though the legal convention was held and proposed reasonable reforms, the suffrage party had voted that when a majority of the citizens of a State, themselves United States citizens, should form and accept by vote a new constitution, it became the fundamental law of the State, and they now displayed a flag with the words: "The Constitution is adopted and shall be maintained." They began to practice military drill and to hold evening parades in Providence.

In March the legislature met, and decided to postpone attempts at reform in the present excitement, but considered it necessary to meet the threatened rebellion by a law to punish those who should accept office or act under the new People's Constitution. The landowners' party called themselves Law and Order Men, but the reformers called them Algerines, recalling the Barbary pirates; this therefore was called the Algerine Law.

The Governor warned the people against supporting the rebels, and called on the President of the United States for military aid; it was not refused, but temporarily withheld as not yet required. United States soldiers just returned from Mexico are said to have been quartered at Crooks' Tavern, but they did not actually enter Rhode Island.

April 18 the suffrage party held a State election under their constitution, and chose for Governor Thomas W. Dorr, the man who had been their leader in the legislature for years. He organized his government the third of May in an unfinished building in Providence, after being escorted by a procession of about one thousand six hundred

and fifty men, of whom four hundred and ninety-five were armed. His legislature adjourned to July, after repealing the Algerine Law and a few other votes; they were unwilling to seize the State House, as Dorr wished to have done. He now visited New York and even Washington, and his story brought him considerable encouragement, with some promises of men and arms, which were not kept.

After his return to Providence at one o'clock in the morning of May 18, a signal gun was fired before his quarters, and he marched to the State arsenal with less than two hundred and fifty men. He called for its surrender and tried in vain to fire a cannon. His men gradually deserted him and he retreated with thirty of them. At nine o'clock he escaped to Connecticut, and the Governor there refused to give him up when it was requested. The Governor of Rhode Island offered \$1000 for his capture.

While he was outside the State again, he met sympathy and promises of support, and his party continued active, especially in the north part of the State. They began to hold meetings and parades again in Woonsocket, June 10, and tried to get cannon and powder into Providence. June 23 the legislature authorized the Governor to proclaim martial law, and Dorr proclaimed the meeting of his legislature at Chepachet, only six miles from the Connecticut line, instead of at Providence, for June 25, and also summoned his troops to that place: "I hereby direct the military of this State who are in favor of the People's Constitution to repair forthwith to headquarters."

Governor King now asked aid from President Tyler for the third time, which was refused "because the legislature though in session had not joined in the request." Martial law was finally declared on June 25, and about

three thousand State troops marched towards Woonsocket and by different routes towards Chepachet. On Monday, June 27, Dorr found out what forces were approaching, and at 7 P.M., he wrote a note saying: "Believing that a majority of the People who voted for the Constitution are opposed to its support by military means, I have directed that all the military here assembled be dismissed." They scattered and he fled, and the Governor offered now \$5000 for his capture. He escaped from the State, but returned later, was convicted under the Algerine law after a long trial, and finally pardoned.

Martial law was enforced in Woonsocket for a week by nearly two hundred soldiers, and this region was in great excitement. A Boston news paper reported: "Rhode Island declares war on the United States." A little girl in Woonsocket was left alone in a house with her baby brother, and when she heard the terrifying cry, "The Algerines are coming," she hid the baby in a bureau drawer for some hours, but it was not harmed. It is said that two Rhode Island officers were sued by the State of Massachusetts for arresting Dorrites under a military order in Bellingham at Crooks' Tavern.

The Massachusetts Governor's account of the affair is in his message to the Senate of September, 1842. The Adjutant General lent to the Rhode Island authorities on their urgent appeal on June 25, five hundred stand of arms, etc. On June 27 the Governor refused to allow him to lend more. Complaints of violence in Massachusetts came from only two places, Pawtucket and Bellingham. On Sunday, June 26, a brawl in Pawtucket, which then belonged to Massachusetts, caused the death of a Pawtucket man on the Massachusetts end of the bridge, from a shot fired by a Rhode Island guard at the other end, and others were wounded. No militia company

was present, and the bridge was wholly in Rhode Island. On June 29 the Pawtucket Selectmen thought that no Massachusetts troops were needed, and none were sent.

On June 30 two men from Bellingham came to the Governor and reported that the night before an armed force broke into Crooks' Tavern and carried away four persons. The Adjutant General was sent to assure the town's people of protection, to find whether the Rhode Island authorities caused the trespass, and to visit Pawtucket.

He found the Bellingham people assembled in a special town meeting, for which the warrant said: "To see what measures the Town will Take concerning a Mob or an armed force invading and breaking into the House of Jeremiah Crooks and Threatening and abusing said Crooks on the night of the 29th inst." They voted to choose a committee of three "to make arrangements for a preparation to defend the Inhabitants of said Town," and he promised them the State's protection and took one of them with him to the commanding officer at Woonsocket. This officer disclaimed all knowledge of the trespass and showed his written orders, which forbade him to cross the State line. The Adjutant General concluded that both parties in the invasion belonged to Rhode Island, and that there was no further danger of its repetition. He found quiet at Pawtucket, and the Rhode Island Governor disclaimed any intention of trespass.

The bitterness of the quarrel reached across the State line, and for a long time after this people of any position and property in South Bellingham were called by their neighbors Algerines.

In 1843 the Woonsocket *Patriot*, the first and greatest of the many local newspapers of adjoining towns read

by Bellingham people, advertised: "A stage leaves Woonsocket at R. Smith's Hotel every morning except Sunday at 6 A. M. Monday, Wednesday and Friday it goes through Bellingham, Medway, Medfield and Dedham to Boston, at 12½ o'clock, the other days through Bellingham, Franklin, Rockville, Medfield, &c. Fare, \$1." It was \$1.50 in 1847, when the Providence and Worcester Railroad began operation.

In 1843 a committee of three was chosen "to buy a stove and funnel to warm the town meeting house," and another to act as a board of health. This appears to be the first stove used; the West Parish people petitioned for one in their meeting house as early as 1820.

In 1844 a committee was chosen "to suppress the sale of ardent spirits in town." A town liquor agent was chosen in 1855.

In 1845, one hundred and sixty-three votes were cast for Representative, and James M. Freeman, the town clerk, received eighty-two and was declared elected for his second term. Another single ballot was found cast against him, and the Selectmen then declared his election lost. He petitioned the General Court, proved that two of the votes against him were illegal, and received his seat.

In 1846 citizens petitioned the town to move towards getting a railroad here.

The first board of auditors was chosen in 1849. Schools and streets both cost \$800 that year. The school committee was three men, besides a prudential committee in each district. The town vacillated between having only one general committee, or district committees, or a combination of both.

In 1851 it took ten ballots on three successive days to choose the town's representative in the Legislature.

Edwin Fairbanks was elected by ninety-one votes against Fenner Cook, who had eighty-two. Mr. Cook was chosen on the second ballot the next year.

In 1852 a committee was chosen to finish off the lower floor of the town house to be let for a boot shop, to appraise the pews on the upper floor, and to adapt it better to town business, but the changes were not made at that time.

In 1853 "Voted to pay 25 cents for the head of an old crow, 12½ for a young one, and 25 for a woodchuck. All other birds and beasts to run at large."

The election of a representative in the Legislature this year was actually given up as a hopeless job, after six indecisive ballots on three separate days. The last result was Noah J. Arnold sixty-one, Jeremiah Crooks forty-two, and Martin Rockwood fifty.

In 1855 a committee of three was chosen to investigate the subject of intemperance and "Root out all such existing evils as may be found in said Town."

The school district which had included both Caryville and North Bellingham up to this time, was now divided, leaving nearly fifty children in the North Bellingham school. The strong opposition to this change caused a lawsuit against the town, but it remained in effect till 1901.

In 1856 Martin Rockwood was elected to the Legislature by one hundred and sixty-eight votes out of two hundred and thirty-nine.

In 1860 it was voted to print an annual report of the town's business. Some of these reports are missing from that year to 1889, but since then the file is complete.

Some of the votes of the Civil War time are as follows: 1861, May 4, To raise \$1000 for soldiers' aid under a committee of eleven persons. May 20, To borrow \$2000 for outfit for drill and for aid.

1862, \$100 to every soldier up to seventeen sworn in for this town, and after them \$10 to every man who enlisted within ten days. August 23, \$200 to every man. September, To borrow \$5000 to pay volunteers for nine months.

1863, To borrow not over \$3000 for aid to soldiers' families. July, \$5000 more.

1864, \$2000 more for State Aid. \$186 to repay all subscribers for the volunteers in 1863.

1865, \$1000 for State Aid.

1866, To repay all subscriptions made for volunteers with interest. \$500 more for State Aid.

The nine persons who held the office of selectmen in the years 1861-1865 were Alanson Bates, Elisha Chase, Calvin Fairbanks, A. H. Holbrook, D. J. Pickering, Savel Metcalf, Martin Rockwood, James A. Thayer and B. W. Woodbury.

In 1863 the list of men in town subject to military duty had one hundred and forty-five names, and thirty-one were then in service. The Massachusetts Records give the names of thirty-three soldiers from Bellingham as follows:

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Edward J. Adams | W. O. Freeman | Jos. W. Holbrook | Asa Pickering |
| Frederick Bates | Patrick Gallagher | Jairus Lawrence | James W. Pickering |
| Amos R. Bent | John J. Gerstle | Thomas McDowell | Robert Post |
| Charles E. Burr | Joseph Gerstle | Peter McKeen | Geo. A. Richardson |
| Howard Carlton | T. G. Getchell | George L. Metcalf | George Swift |
| Martin V. B. Cook | Samuel D. Gregory | John C. Metcalf | John Terlin |
| John V. Coombs | Chas. P. Hancock | Garrick F. Moore | Elisha H. Town |
| Pardon L. Crosby | Handel Holbrook | Joseph Osgood | Willis Whiting |
| James Davis | | | |

There are ten names on the Soldiers' Monument, six of which are not on the list above:

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Thomas Carey | C. Philip Hancock | Joseph Osgood | Calvin C. Thayer |
| W. Ellis Cook | Jos. W. Holbrook | H. Perry Slocum | Lewis E. Whitney |
| Moses Drake | Jairas Lawrence | | |

In 1892 when the town made its first appropriation for Memorial Day (of \$50), thirty-six graves of Civil War soldiers were decorated, eighteen at the Centre and eleven at North Bellingham. Asa Partridge, my father, was included, for his service under the United States Christian Commission. The graves of his grandfather, Joseph, and great grandfather, Benjamin, are marked for Revolutionary Service.

In 1905 sixteen survivors of the Civil War were reported here.

The men now living in town who served in this war are Henry Otis Arnold, aged seventy-seven, Oliver Miette eighty-one, John Miner seventy-nine, and Henry W. Pickering seventy-eight.

In 1864 the people of the Caryville School District made a public subscription of over \$30 to extend the school term there.

The militia list of 1864 contained one hundred and forty-seven names; fifty were farmers, fifty-one worked on boots, seventeen were mill hands and mechanics, and the rest were scattered among many occupations.

In January, 1867, there was a great snowstorm; Hollis Metcalf wrote that no steam cars ran for a week.

Land was bought to enlarge the town house lot in 1870, making more room for the school yard, and \$3000 was voted for a new building in 1873.

In 1875 a lockup for tramps had to be built; it was well filled for some years, and then became entirely unnecessary.

The justices of the peace in this town in 1876 were Andrew A. Bates, Nathan A. Cook, Dr. Roland Hammond, David Lawrence and Savel Metcalf.

The streets were named and their names were put up in 1878.

In 1880 George H. Partridge of Medway was stabbed in a drunken brawl at North Bellingham, and Frank and Amos T. Adams were sentenced to the State prison.

The town voted against allowing women to be voters and town officers in 1881. In the same year a motion to build a union schoolhouse for Caryville and North Bellingham was lost by a vote of forty-eight to fifty-one. \$3000 for a building at North Bellingham was voted instead.

In 1882 Charles O. Drake was killed by a runaway horse.

The town's appropriations in 1885 were \$1800 for schools, for the poor \$1500, highways \$900, bridges \$250, debt \$800, interest \$600, town buildings \$450, town officers \$400, incidentals \$300, and for printing, guide boards and school incidentals \$50 each. The eight school buildings were called worth \$10,500.

In 1889 a permanent committee of three, one chosen each year, was formed to manage the cemetery fund and care for the cemeteries. Electric cars began to run this year by the Four Corners between Franklin and Woonsocket.

The Bellingham Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was formed in 1891. It has the use of a good dining room in the town house, and it has often held an agricultural exhibition in the fall, which was a pleasant old-home day for many of our present and former citizens.

In 1892 the first appropriation of \$50 for Memorial Day was made; it has been continued ever since.

Water pipes from Woonsocket were laid on Center Street the next year.

In 1894 the town accepted the State library act, and voted to join a district to employ a Superintendent of Schools, and to build a two-room schoolhouse at Crooks'

Corner for \$3000 the next year. The town high school held its first graduation in 1896, but after a few years the high school pupils here were sent away to other towns.

Electric cars began to run from Caryville to Milford and Medway in 1897, and two years later from Caryville to Four Corners, and from Four Corners by Bellingham Centre to Milford.

The number of our men who engaged in the Spanish War in 1898 is not exactly known; there were five survivors of it here in 1905.

In 1900 a State highway was begun at Crooks' Corner, running towards the Center. The town made a liberal appropriation for its old record books this year, and they are in good condition.

\$10,000 was voted in 1901 to be repaid \$500 annually, to build a schoolhouse for North Bellingham and Caryville, and \$3000 to add two rooms to the Center building.

The telephone reached as far as Scott Hill from Woonsocket in 1904, and gas pipes from that city were laid in Center Street the next year.

The South Bellingham schoolhouse was finished in 1906; it had cost \$7500.

Electric lights were brought to Caryville and North Bellingham in 1907, and to the South End the next year.

Walter H. Thayer, the present town treasurer, was first chosen in 1909.

In 1910 \$3000 was spent to fit up the lower floor of the town house for the town offices, a vault for records, dining room, etc.

Charles Burr, who lived alone at Box Pond, was found apparently murdered for money in 1915; no clue to the mystery has been found.

In May, 1919, two persons from neighboring towns in an automobile were killed by a railroad train, near Bel-

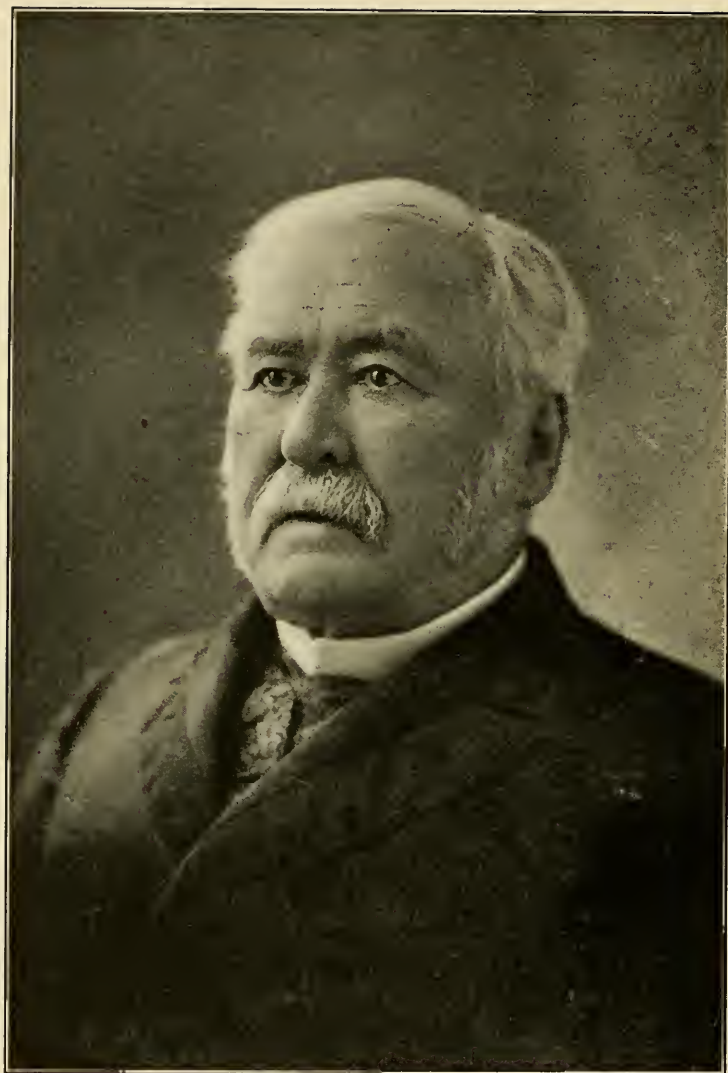
lingham Junction and Mrs. Elizabeth Foley was killed at the North Bellingham crossing in the same month.

For the World War our town subscribed more than its quota of bonds each time.

BELLINGHAM HONOR ROLL

Of these seventy-five men the forty whose names are marked A crossed the ocean.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| John J. Allen, Aviation (A) | Henry Lemire |
| William H. Allison (A) | Frederick E. Lipsett (A) |
| Herbert B. Arnold, Regular Army (A) | William R. Mann (A) |
| Samuel W. Baader, Artillery (A) | John E. McMahon |
| George Baxter (A) | William M. McMahon, Naval Reserve |
| John Baxter (A) | George M. Melrose, Aviation |
| Norman Baxter | Robert B. Melrose |
| Albert Bernier, Navy (A) | Hervie E. Miette (A) |
| Josaphat O. Bernier (A) | Joseph E. Miner (A) |
| Willfred G. Bernier, Signal Corps (A) | Matthew F. Mooney (A) |
| Wilfred Boiteau | John J. Murphy |
| Alexander W. Brown, Artillery | Ernest A. Nash (A) |
| James N. Colt | Albert Ober |
| Harland Cook | William P. O'Connell |
| Andor DeJony (A) | Emil Paquin |
| Albert Deschacht (A) | Joseph A. Paquin, Aviation |
| Francis P. Diggins (A) | Cyrille Parenteau, Jr. (A) |
| Patrick Dore, Naval Reserve | Aleksander Piascik (A) |
| Tancred Dorval, Jr., Artillery | Edmund Rattier (A) |
| Joseph A. Farley | Frank Rattier (A) |
| Henry Fergelewski (A) | Joseph Reith |
| Bernard J. Fitzpatrick (A) | Arthur A. Rhodes, Artillery |
| Daniel J. Fitzpatrick (A) | Joseph Rivard |
| Joseph M. Flannagan, Navy (A) | Eugenio Rotatori (A) |
| William V. Flannagan (A) | Saverio Rotatori (A) |
| Cornelius J. Foley (A) | Harold G. Sackett, Naval Reserve |
| Fred D. Foley | Daniel J. Sheehy |
| William M. Foley, Navy | Hugh F. Smith (A) |
| Raymond Fontaine (A) | John J. Smith (A) |
| Frank T. Hoar, Artillery (A) | Michael J. Smith |
| Cecil E. Howarth (A) | William A. Spear |
| Frederick W. Hunter, Navy | Edward L. Spencer, *Pneumonia |
| Robert H. Hunter, Aviation | Joseph Tessier (A) |
| Michael J. Kennedy, Naval Reserve | Joseph A. Thibedeau (A) |
| James W. Kennelly, Aviation (A) | William J. Walsh, Naval Reserve |
| J. Waldo Kennelly | Ralph G. White, Navy (A) |
| Patrick H. Kiernan, Navy | William F. Wright (A) |
| Honorius Laudreville | |



GOVERNOR JOHN M. THAYER, 1820—1905

CHAPTER XIII

PERSONS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

BESIDES those already mentioned, there are other persons of whom some account should be given.

Gen. Eliakim Adams, 1756-1807, was one of our many Revolutionary soldiers. He was born and lived for some years in Holliston. April 19, 1775, he served as a private, and in April, 1777. In August of that year he was a sergeant, and he served in 1780. After the war he was active in the militia. In 1795 in the list of members of the General Court he is a major from Medway, and again the next year a colonel. He wrote in his resignation from the militia in 1803: "Having served three years as a Brigadier General, and two and twenty years as a Militia Officer without any compensation, and am upward of forty years of age, I am desirous of being discharged." He is commemorated by a granite monument in front of the tomb of the North Bellingham cemetery.

Captain Laban Adams, 1785-1849, was born in West Medway and lived on Maple Street at North Bellingham. He had seven children born there, and one in Medway. He kept a tavern in Medway, and then the Washington Coffee House and the Lamb Tavern in Boston. This house was mentioned in 1746, and the first coach to Providence started here in 1767. He was the landlord in 1822, when a large brick addition was built, and until 1825. In 1830 he bought it, and

managed it for eight years, when he leased it to another man for seven years. Then he returned again, and built a new hotel on the same spot, which he opened in 1846 as the Adams House, a name unchanged since then.

William T. Adams, 1822-1897, was born at North Bellingham, the son of Capt. Laban Adams. He was the pioneer story writer for young people, famous under the name of Oliver Optic. At seventy-three years of age he had written one hundred and twenty-six books and over a thousand short stories. Two million copies of his books were sold. For his first one he received \$37.50. He is remembered as reading aloud some of his stories in the Hall at North Bellingham, and as a schoolboy there, while his family was living in Medway.

He traveled much to find material for his stories, and he was careful to make them useful as well as entertaining. He was a member of the school committee in Dorchester where he lived, and was a useful citizen there.

John Albee, 1823-1915, was the literary man of the town. His father was a farmer, who died when John was a little boy. He began to work at twelve years of age as a farmer's boy, clerk, etc., but was sent away later to school and college, and graduated at the Harvard Divinity School in 1858. While he was a teacher and a preacher in Western Massachusetts he was married, and his wife, who was a nurse for love of the work, established a remarkable charitable hospital in Boston. They had a beautiful home on the seashore at Newcastle, N. H., where he wrote books of poetry and imagination. He was one of the chief supporters of the Concord School of Philosophy, lectured there, and edited the Portsmouth, N. H., daily paper awhile.

His second wife was a writer also, and their home

was at Tamworth, N. H. His "Confessions of Boyhood" is an imaginative autobiography, with pictures of life in Bellingham long ago. His home was not far from the Scammel house at South Milford, and he never lived in a village here. Here are a few sentences from that book.

"The traveller, journeying through the highways of Bellingham, would see nothing to attract his attention or interest. It has no monuments, ruins nor historic associations; no mountain, nor hill even. The Charles River has travelled so little way from its source as hardly yet to be a river. The soil is stony and pays back not much more than is put into it. The fine forests of white oak have been mostly reduced to ashes. Scrub oak and gray birch have taken their places, but do not fill them.

No eminent sons have yet remembered the town with noble benefactions. It has had no poet and no mention in literature. The reporters pass it by. It is not even a suburb, last sad fate of many towns and villages. This is one of the reasons for my attachment — its unchangeableness, its entire satisfaction of sentiment.

Fortunate is the town with a river flowing through its whole length and boys and girls to accompany its unhasting waters. It was made for them, also for the little fishes and the white-scented lilies. For a few hours of the day the great floats of the mill wheel drank of it, sending it onward in the only agitation it ever permitted itself. Then there was Bear Hill, though never a bear in the oldest memory, yet the name was ominous to children.

Before cities and factories had begun to stir the ambition and attract the young by opportunities for fortune and fame, Bellingham was the home of an intelligent, liberty-loving people. It was the best place in the world to be born in. I thank Heaven for a town removed from the track of progress, uninvaded by summer

visitors and business enterprises; land left sacred to its native inhabitants, a sluggish stream, unprofitable earth, huckleberry bushes and the imagination.

It grieves me that the Charles has never been celebrated in verse or prose, but by one short song of Longfellow, while the Concord, which rises on the same watershed and almost from the same spring, has had several famous poets and is historic in Revolutionary annals. Our stream wanders a hundred miles in its efforts to find the ocean, and it never has any headlong haste to arrive. It saunters like a schoolboy and stops to visit a thousand recesses and indentations of upland and meadow. It stays for a cow to drink, or an alder to root itself in the bank, or to explore a swamp, and it rather wriggles than runs through its eighteen townships. It is likely to stop at any one of them and give up the effort to reach the sea. For my part I wish it had, and actually, as in my memory and fancy, ended at the outermost shores of Bellingham."

Nathan A. Cook, 1823-1896, was a descendant of the pioneer Nicholas Cook. His father, Nahum, was for some years the only Democrat in town. Nathan taught school seventeen winters, and was a justice of the peace for thirty years. He settled many estates and was a member of the Legislature in 1882.

Hamlet Barber, 1785-1870, lived at South Milford, and was a popular dancing master. Later in life he became a strict Baptist. He was postmaster of Bellingham in 1829-1831.

George W. Bosworth, D.D., 1818-1888, belonged to an old Bellingham family, and joined the Baptist Church here at thirteen years of age. He graduated at Colby College and at Newton Theological Seminary in 1841. He was the first pastor of a new Baptist Church at Medford for five years, at South Boston nine years,

Portland ten, Lawrence four, and Haverhill ten. From 1852 to 1856 and again from 1879 to his death, he was the Secretary of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, the official head of the denomination in the State.

Horace A. Brown, 1867-1918, had come from Maine to Milford when a boy, and he graduated at the Milford High School in 1885. After working in a shoe factory and a dry goods store, he entered the Home National Bank, where he remained for thirty years, and became its cashier. After his marriage in 1897, his home was in Caryville. He served the town on the school committee and was the leader in building the three new schoolhouses, the largest undertakings of our town in recent years.

Jeremiah Crooks, 1791-1864, came from Maine to live with his grandfather, Cornelius Darling, when he was thirteen years old. He came on a sailing vessel, and walked from Boston to Bellingham, spending one night in Medway on the way. He taught school, was a surveyor, and drove a stage to Providence. In 1834 he bought the tavern of Wright Curtis, and kept it for about thirty years. He was a militia captain and the town's Representative at the General Court in 1843. The name Crooks' Corner remains to us from his time.

Rufus G. Fairbanks, 1859-1907, was the son of William Fairbanks, the boot manufacturer. He studied at an academy and at Boston University Law School. He then worked and traveled for an educational paper till 1891, when he was admitted to the bar. His home was built at West Medway, where he was a trial justice. He was very active as a Republican, an Odd Fellow and a Mason, and no one did more than he for the Fairbanks Family Association. He wrote the chapter on Bellingham in Hurd's "History of Norfolk County," published in 1884.

Cornelius Jones, 1727-1803, was the grandson of Elder John Jones of Mendon, the first man to use the water power at Hopedale. His father was an early settler in Bellingham, and he graduated at Harvard College in 1752. He was ordained in a barn in town No. 3 in Berkshire County, later called Sandisfield, in 1757, and settled over its first church. He married a daughter of Thomas Sanford, living there, but left the place after five years on account of "a difficulty" in the church, and bought ten thousand acres of wild land near the present Fitchburg Tunnel, where he settled. He preached sometimes, but never had a church again. He became rich and was very patriotic and commanded the militia of the town of Rowe at the capture of Burgoyne. One of his sons was killed in a skirmish with Indians. His wife wrote to her sister in Newport that they feared losing their poor house in the woods by the attacks of Indians as much as the Newport sister feared the coming of the British fleet. Mr. Jones had just got a drove of cattle safely to the American camp, but lost his horse. In 1780 the resolute pioneer sold all his land and moved again, this time to a place near Whitehall, N. Y., where he ended his days.

John Metcalf, 1704-1791, bought part of Rawson's Farm in Caryville in 1735. He was the son of John of Dedham who had three wives and eighteen children, the son of Deacon Jonathan, the son of Michael, the first Metcalf in this country, who came in 1637. He had been a weaver at Norwich, England, was persecuted there, and came with his wife, nine children and a servant. He was the first school teacher and one of the selectmen at Dedham, where he died in 1639. His estate was 364£ 18 s. 5 d.

The second John had a large book, now in the library

of the Massachusetts Historical Society, in which he wrote all sorts of memoranda, some of which are valuable.

"I John Metcalf Junr of Dedham on the 17 of May 1727 was with my Grandfather Deacon Jonathan Metcalf then on his Death Bed Being in the 77th year of his age & I in the 23d year of my age . . . I said to my Grandfather many have been wont to Set highly by the Blessing of their aged Relations, I Did So, I would be Glad if You would give me Yours, I Desire You too. he Said my Blessing is But a Poor thing & then said The God of Abraham . . . &c. the foregoing is writ down Directly after it was Spoken Transcribed from the original writing Mar 8 1777 John Metcalf."

He had thirteen children, and his wife died in 1754. The next winter he wrote this letter to the widow in Dedham who became his second wife.

"BELLINGHAM Jan 31 1755

"Mrs. Abigail Fisher

"Madam You will Excuse my taking up Your Precious time to read any thing from one so remote as I am, You have it, & it is at Your Pleasure to read it or let it alone mean as it is. The last night I got to Medfield by Dark the last half hour rained hard I staid there about an Hour Set out when the rain abated the first 5 miles very Dark my horse rushed my knee against the fence but the smart soon over Several times the limbs gentely brushed my face It rained hard again about half an hour the moon rises about 9 I got home found my family all well except Stephen (24 years old) who has a fit of the fever every Day let him & J come into remembrance with you in your best Hours and will You bear me Company in my meditations as I came home The night being so dark I cannot see my horses head nor my hand No Person nigh

me If my Horse should throw me to afford me any help
 how mellancolly the seen all Dark Solitary and Gloomy,
 but am I alone tho my acquaintance & You my friend
 are at a Distance and no Human Creature near me Yet
 tis Probable that thousands of spiritual beings are moving
 unseen about the Earth in the Dark as well as light
 Perhaps there may be Some of those invisible beings
 very near unto me in this Gloom.

I have wrote only a small sketch of my meditations
 they mought tire you my Dear I subscribe my Self Among
 the many that have Paid You their Regards the Most
 Unworthy.

Yet Your Truest Friend
 and Loving
 Humble Servant

John Metcalf

There are several notes in regard to Quakers, and
 he had a strong leaning towards their views, though he
 brought a letter from the Dedham Church to the town
 church of Bellingham in 1738, given in Chapter VI.

“All worshiping God without the Imediate Influence
 of the Holy Spirit of God is vaine & Hipocrisie Every
 Congregation that forbids all that have anything Revealed
 to them to Preach & Pray, & Confines it to one of the
 Congregation, All Such Worship is after the Doctrines
 of men and not according to the Commandments of the
 Lord. All Worship Appointed by men without Divine
 athority is Idolatrous & offering strange fire Therefore
 I cannot Joyne with Such in their Worship.

1778

JOHN METCALF.”

“Jan 5 1778 Weighed my Silver Plate 9£ 16 s 8d”

“1782 Books read from the library in Medway in which I have a Right Returned 1st Thursday in March and every 3 months Harmonie of O & New Tests. Thomas Hutchinson’s History of New England, Peter the Grate, Burnet History of the Reformation, Oliver Cromwell, History of Charles V.”

By his will his books were divided into eleven parts to be given to his grandson John and ten children. His son Stephen received all his land in Bellingham.

After his death his widow, Abigail, who had no children of her own, continued to live in his house with his son Stephen, the Judge. This house had then a long ell behind it, as appears from her petition to the Judge of Probate in 1794:

“I have been a faithful wife near 36 years to John Metcalf. I live in a large house Eight rooms on the ground three cellars and plenty of chambers. I sleep near 50 feet from any human being and I need help. The Squire’s daughter is a weakly woman without time or skill to nurse an Old Lady. I have given my husband’s five daughters and one granddaughter all my gold and most of my wearing apparel. I entreat of the Judge to give me power to draw 20 £ of my husband’s furniture and to give me one third of the estate. Abigail Metcalf.”

Stephen Metcalf, 1731-1800, was the most prominent citizen of the town and has often been mentioned already. He married Hepzibah Adams, the granddaughter of Thomas Sanford, and was my great great grandfather. The value of his land within the town was estimated at \$7377. Besides the care of his farm, he was a surveyor and a lawyer. He was a trial justice in this district for many years, and then a judge of the Court of Common Pleas for this county. He was often

engaged in county affairs, and besides his seven years at the General Court as our Representative he was a senator nine years and for two years a member of the Governor's Council.

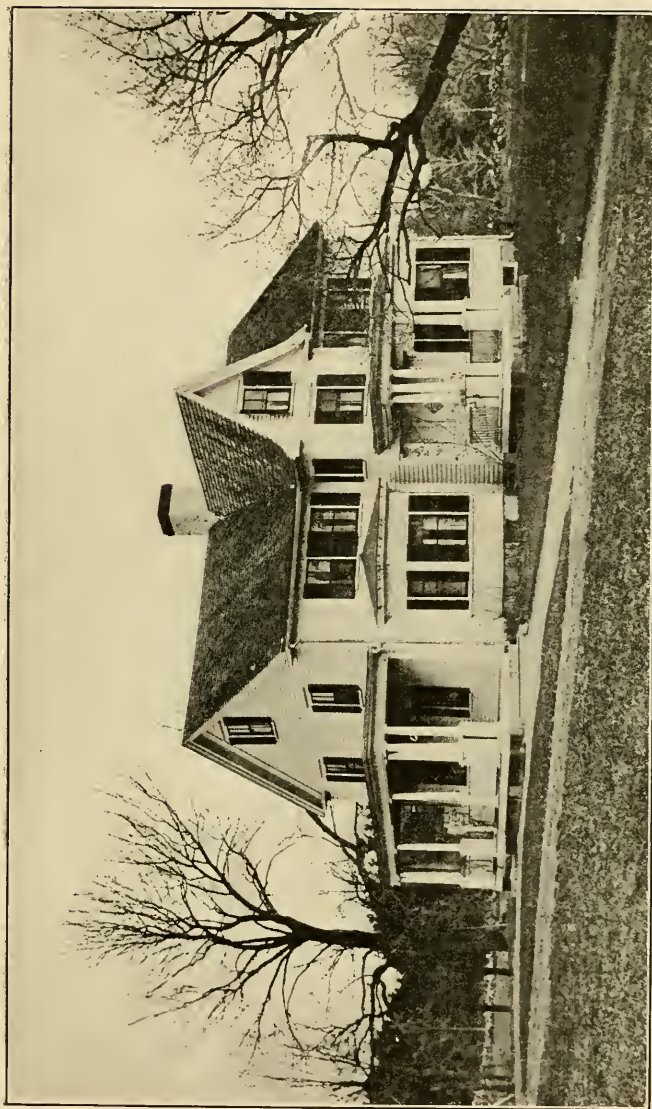
Stephen Metcalf

1731 — 1800

Caroline F. Orne, 1818, was descended from Simon Stowe who came to Watertown in 1635, and her childhood home stood where Mt. Auburn Cemetery is now. She was the librarian of the Cambridge Public Library for seventeen years, and she wrote stories and poems of early New England history. Her sister was the wife of Dr. Nelson, and she herself was a member of the Bellingham Church for many years.

Joseph M. Rockwood, 1818-1910, belonged to a family that had lived in Bellingham for four generations. His sister married Joseph Ray. He graduated at Dartmouth College at nineteen years of age, and then at Newton Theological Seminary in 1841. He was a Baptist pastor at Rutland, Vt., eight years, Belchertown six, Grafton seven, and Middlefield for twenty-five years. In 1851 he was a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention, went to the General Court in 1864, and served under the United States Christian Commission in the Civil War. He was married for sixty-five years, and had seven children. In 1890 he retired, and he died at the age of ninety-two, the oldest graduate of both his college and his seminary.

Alexander Scammel, 1747-1781, was the son of Dr. Samuel L. Scammel of South Milford, who married the



BUILT BY STEPHEN METCALF IN 1777 NOW OWNED BY M. J. CONNOLLY

daughter of Dr. Corbett. He was fitted for college by Rev. Amariah Frost of Milford, and graduated at Harvard in 1769. He was a school teacher in Plymouth and Kingston and then went to New Hampshire, where he did surveying and then began to study law with General Sullivan. He helped him capture a fort near Portsmouth, ammunition from which was used at Bunker Hill. They both went to Cambridge, where Scammel served as a major in 1776. The next year he commanded the first New Hampshire regiment at Ticonderoga, and was wounded in the first fight with Burgoyne. The next winter he became Adjutant General of the American army, and he held that office till 1781. When Major André was executed for a spy, Scammel was the officer of the day. In 1781 at his own request he was given command of the light infantry of the army, composed of parts of several regiments. It was used in the vicinity of New York, and then in Virginia with the French army. During the siege of Yorktown he went out with a reconnoitering party at daybreak, was surprised and mortally injured. Cornwallis allowed him to be carried to Williamsburg, where he died. He was a man six feet two inches tall, intelligent, honorable and brave. He had the full confidence of General Washington, whose dignity it was noticed often kept other officers at a distance. His character and his fate impressed both his associates and the whole country, and he is one of the officers in the painting of Burgoyne's surrender in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington.

This epitaph was written at the time:

“Though no kind angel glanced aside the ball,
Nor fed’ral arms pour’d vengeance for his fall;
Brave Scammel’s fame, to distant regions known,
Shall last beyond this monumental stone,

Which conq'ring armies, from their toils returned,
Rear'd to his glory, while his fate they mourned."

Elijah B. Stowe, 1845-1909, of Milbury, came to this town after his marriage in 1869. He kept the village store at Caryville and was station agent and postmaster for forty years. He held town offices, and was a member of the Legislature in 1889. Church choirs were led by him in West Medway and in two of the Milford churches, and he belonged to the Worcester Music Festival Chorus for twenty-three years. He managed many concerts and oratorios in Milford, twelve of them annually, with the aid of the best singers to be had and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. By this work in conducting choirs, training choruses and managing concerts he raised the musical standards of this whole region, and became a public benefactor. His public service is commemorated by a bronze tablet in the Milford Congregational Church.

John M. Thayer, 1820-1905, had both his grandfathers in the Revolutionary Army. His home was very near the site of the first church, the actual center of the town. He fitted for college with two of the Bellingham pastors, Mr. Newton and Mr. Massey, and graduated at Brown University in 1841. After studying law in Worcester, he made a six weeks' journey to Omaha in 1854, a few months after the territory was organized. Here he was admitted to the bar, but began as a farmer and pioneer, built the first frame house and became interested in politics. He became a Republican in 1857. For six years he was an Indian fighter. The territorial legislature made him a brigadier general of its troops, and then a major general till the Civil War. Twice he dealt with an uprising of all the Pawnees, who had fifteen hundred warriors, the second time in 1859.



E. B. STOWE, 1845—1909

In 1860 he raised a full regiment of one thousand Nebraska men in a population of twenty-eight thousand eight hundred and forty-one, and entered the war as their colonel. He served as brigadier general of volunteers with Grant and Sherman, and resigned as a major general in July, 1865. He was elected one of the first United States Senators from Nebraska the same year, and served six years. In 1875 President Grant appointed him Governor of Wyoming, where he spent four years. He was elected Governor of Nebraska for two terms, and held office for five years. In 1892 he retired to private life, and died in 1906.

Henry A. Whitney, 1842-1915, was the man of our time who knew the most about the history of the town. He had been constable, tree warden, cemetery trustee, selectman five years, promoter of the town library and its trustee, Representative at the General Court in 1904, and town clerk, 1883-1915. As early as 1912 he proposed a small annual appropriation for a town history at the time of this two hundredth anniversary.

Besides the two Corbets and the three Scammels several other doctors have lived in this town.

Dr. S. Atwood was on the school committee in 1833.

Dr. W. H. Clark, who lived here a few years, was killed on the railroad at South Milford in 1902.

Dr. Collins was here some time before 1850.

Dr. Roland Hammond was on the school committee for several years from 1872, and was town clerk from 1890 to 1892.

Dr. Amos Holbrook, 1754-1842, was "one of the most eminent medical men of the county during his whole practice. He had not a college education, but this deficiency was more than made up by his experience as an army surgeon and by residence and study in France."

He went to live in Milton, and "he had the best practice in that town and Dorchester."

Dr. Timothy Merriam was here some time before 1850.

Dr. George Nelson, 1797-1875, lived in the house at the top of the hill at Bellingham Center.

Dr. N. W. Sanborn left town after a few years in 1895, and returned for a while in 1903.

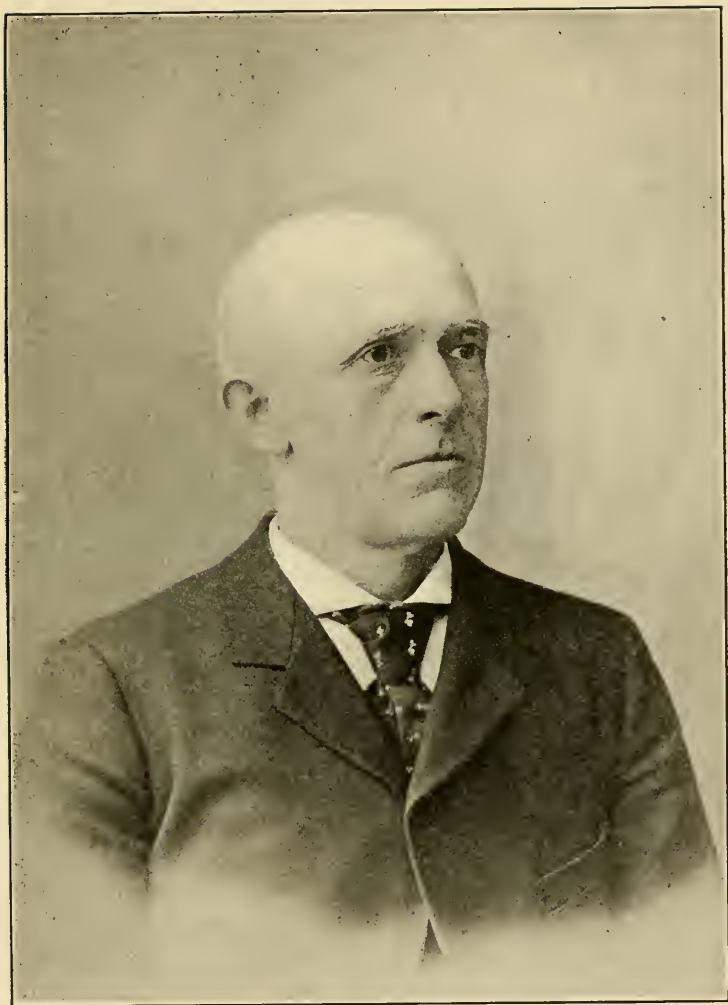
Dr. S. A. Stanley was on the school committee in 1838.

Dr. Jonathan Thayer, 1717 to about 1765, is said to have stood well in his profession.

Dr. Daniel Thurber, 1768-1836, of Rehoboth, studied medicine with the doctor of his own town for three years, and then began to practice at the age of twenty-one at South Milford. His house was in Mendon most of the time, but for two years he lived in Bellingham, and represented it at the General Court in 1806 and 1807, as he did Mendon for many years. He won many friends, and was the busiest man of his profession in this vicinity. He was very firm, in both principles and practice. His advice was often asked, and both Harvard and Brown Universities gave him an honorary degree in medicine. The Thurber Medical Association of Milford and vicinity is named for him. He wrote a little chemistry for beginners, in verse, and many epitaphs and poems for July 4. His chubby face was long remembered, with iron gray curls that shook when he laughed. He had no children. This is his epitaph:

"A stranger to this town I came,
And left my father's home.
To heal the sick my mind was led,
And now I'm numbered with the dead."

Dr. William Whitaker was married in 1775 and again in 1807; he is occasionally mentioned in the records of town meetings.



HENRY A. WHITNEY, 1842—1915

CHAPTER XIV

BELLINGHAM IN 1919

OUR town is on the western border of Norfolk County, and its south end borders on Rhode Island. Its center is thirty miles from Boston, and twenty from Providence, seven from Woonsocket, five from Franklin and four from Milford. It is eight miles long, and from two miles wide at the south end to three at the north, with an area of twelve and one-half square miles. There is not much to be said for the land of the town; the exploring committee from Dedham in 1692 reported that it was not worth laying out. A gazetteer of 1828 says: "The soil is sandy and not of the first quality." Near the center is Saddleback Hill, three hundred and forty feet above the level of the sea, which is a part of the watershed between the Charles and Blackstone River valleys. The Charles River leaves the town at Caryville about one hundred and sixty feet above sea level. Another noticeable hill is Scott Hill, over which runs South Main Street, the western border of the Peter's River valley, which is the southern half of the town. This beautiful, clear stream is said to be named for crabbed old Peter Bates, who lived beside it at the foot of a long hill south of the State line, and kept slaves.

Early in the course of this stream, near the Franklin line, Maj. Joel Crooks had two sawmills; he used in the afternoon at the lower one the same water which came from the forenoon's work at the upper one.

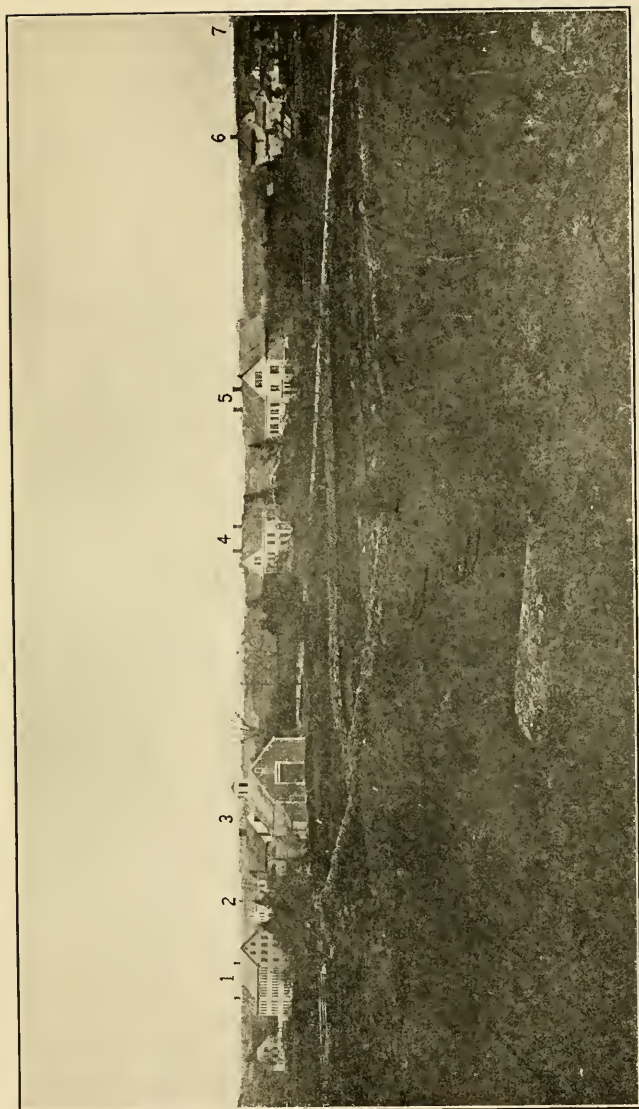
Near the middle of its course is Hoag Lake, where

an amusement park was run by the street railway company for several years. Farther down and a little above Rakeville is Jenckes' Reservoir, which furnishes ice for Woonsocket. A little south of it is Bungay Brook, coming from Wrentham on the east.

At the eastern edge of this valley near Bald Hill, before the railroad came, there was a well known mineral spring. In the swamp above Hoag Lake is a place called the Stamping Ground because deer used to meet there. On the Crooks farm near the stream is a ledge called Fortin's Rock; the story is that a slave of that name (Fortune?) used to pray there when he came to wash in the morning. Near to it is a boulder with a large square hole drilled in it, supposed to have been used by Indians for crushing corn.

This whole valley was a natural resort for the Red Men, whose canoes could descend the Blackstone from Woonsocket Falls and the Charles from the falls at the Red Mill. Arrow heads are found on the bluff north of Crooks' Corner, near Jenckes' Reservoir and elsewhere, and Indians were buried where the South Cemetery is now.

The other end of the town has a larger stream, the Charles River, coming from Hopkinton and Milford, which enters Bellingham near its northwest corner. It widens into Factory Pond at South Milford, where it separates the two towns, and here is the first of the four water powers averaging sixty-five horse power, which first made this a manufacturing town. At Bellingham Center the river turns east and forms two ponds, Box Pond and the "Navy Yard" with its Red Mill. Here, too, flows in a brook nearly two miles long from the clear water of Beaver Pond, which is itself half as long. The second water power is at the Red Mill. After flowing east for two miles the river then runs nearly north,



CARYVILLE ABOUT 1870

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------|
| 1 Boot Shop | 3 Calvin Fairbanks | 5 William Fairbanks | 7 Mill |
| 2 Francis Metcalf | 4 Edwin Fairbanks | 6 C. H. Cutler | |

cutting off about a third of the town's surface from the rest; most of this part was Rawson's Farm. Stall Brook comes from Milford like the river, and flows into it at North Bellingham. At the last two falls in the river come the two northern villages, North Bellingham and Caryville, the latter spreading out into Medway and Franklin.

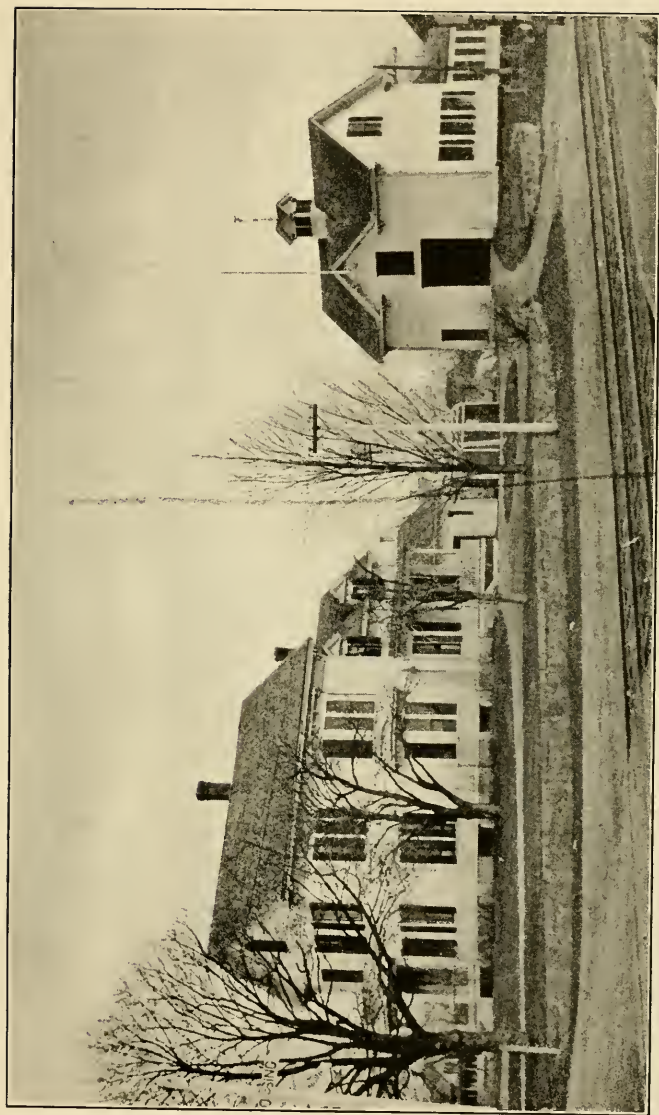
To go from one end of the town to the other, one begins at the northeast corner and follows Hartford Avenue for three miles, then North Main Street to the Center, South Main Street to Crooks' Corner and then a half mile on Centre Street to Woonsocket, at the southwest corner. The whole journey is over State or improved road. The first of these streets is the oldest in town, laid out in 1670 from Medfield to Mendon, and a part of the middle road from Boston to Hartford. It was incorporated as a turnpike about 1796, and people paid toll to use it; one toll house was near the Green Store at South Milford. In 1806 Stephen Metcalf took a contract to build one hundred and eighty-three rods of it through Black Swamp in Medway twenty-four feet wide, graveled eight feet wide, for \$2.43 a rod; a share in its ownership was sold as late as 1821. In 1914 the State, Millis and Medway together spent \$9000 on this part of it. From Bellingham Center to Medway the road is being rebuilt this year. This long main axis of the town is crossed by another much busier one, leading from Milford to Franklin. This, like the road from Crooks' Corner to Woonsocket, was built by the State in 1902-1906 at a total cost of \$23,000 for both. They had cost \$9685 to maintain in 1917; Bellingham paid \$318 for that purpose that year.

An alphabetical list of the streets in the town; they were named in 1878:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Arthur Street | Wrentham Street to Paine Street. |
| Beech Street | Caryville to Franklin. |
| Blackstone Street | Mechanic Street, southwest across the town to Blackstone. |
| Brook Street | Blackstone Street to Mendon Street. |
| Centre Street | South Main Street to Woonsocket. |
| Chestnut Street | South Main Street to Blackstone. |
| Cross Street | Centre Street by Hoag Lake to Franklin. |
| Depot Street | Town Hall to South Milford by Bellingham Junction. |
| Farm Street | Caryville by the Town Farm to Hartford Avenue again. |
| Governor Avenue | Centre Street to Pothier Street near Blackstone. |
| Grove Street | South Milford to Milford. |
| Hartford Avenue | Caryville to South Milford. |
| High Street | Crimpsville to Maple Street. |
| Hixon Street | Hartford Avenue near Beaver Pond. |
| Lake Street | Cross Street to Wrentham Street. |
| Locust Street | Franklin Street to Wrentham Street. |
| Mechanic Street | Town Hall to Four Corners, southeast. |
| Mendon Street | Town Hall west to Mendon. |
| Nason Street | Hartford Avenue to Taunton Street. |
| North Street | Blackstone Street to Mendon. |
| North Main Street | Town Hall to Hartford Avenue. |
| Paine Street | Crooks' Corner to East Woonsocket. |
| Pearl Street | Caryville to Franklin. |
| Pine Street | Maple Street to Franklin. |
| Railway Street | Centre Street to Lake Street. |
| Social Street | Woonsocket to Centre Street. |
| South Main Street | Town Hall by Scott Hill to Crooks' Corner. |
| Taunton Street | Crimpsville to South Milford. |
| Westminster Avenue | Centre Street to Blackstone. |
| Wrentham Street | Crooks' Corner to Wrentham. |

The villages and localities in town, beginning at the north, are these: Caryville, North Bellingham, Partridge-town, South Milford, Crimpsville, Bellingham Center, Four Corners, Scott Hill, Rand's Crossing or South Bellingham, Rakeville and Crooks' Corner.

Most of the land of Caryville belonged to the Metcalf family for a long time. Joseph Fairbanks bought his farm and the water power on the Charles River here from them, and started the factory in 1813, which has run ever since. His grandsons, Edwin and William Fairbanks, began the manufacture of boots, the second town industry in size, which lasted till the shop was burned in 1876.



BUILT BY E. B. STOWE IN 1877

The school district here was set off from the next one in 1855, and a good building was put up, used till 1901, when the two districts were united again, with the present large building. The first grocery store here was kept by Alphæus Grant in the building now used as a part of the mill office. His successor was Warren Mann of West Medway, and then E. B. Stowe, who was station agent and postmaster for forty years. This store belongs now to Goldthwaite Brothers, and there is another at the electric car station, kept by Camp Brothers. The Caryville postmasters have been David Lawrence 1866, Calvin Fairbanks 1867, E. B. Stowe 1885, Josephine M. Stowe 1888, Edith M. Brown 1903, F. N. Chase 1914, Perry Goldthwaite, Jr. 1915.

North Bellingham is the second village, about a mile south of Caryville. Deacon Thomas Sanford built "a mansion house" beside Stall Brook, which Pelatiah Smith bought of him in 1702, with about two hundred acres of land. His family owned most of it for nearly two hundred years. His grandson started the principal tavern in town here, which still stands after over a century, the largest dwelling house in town, now owned by the Bellingham Woolen Company. A manufacturers' directory calls the population of North Bellingham four hundred.

The oldest and largest cemetery joins the Smith lands on the south. The mill here has run since 1810, when it was built for a company of Mendon and Franklin men by Joseph Ray. There are two churches here. The village store was kept by David Lawrence, by Elbridge Grant for many years, and is now kept by Camp Brothers. The North Bellingham postmasters have been M. Z. Bullard 1850, N. J. Arnold 1851, L. P. Coburn 1855, C. H. Chace 1856, E. J. Adams 1857, A. L. Metcalf 1862, S. J. Law-

rence 1866, S. B. Smith 1870, Elbridge Grant 1880, Grace Grant 1909, E. E. Grant 1910, and E. T. Camp 1911.

Partridgetown is a part of the valley of Stall Brook on Farm Street, including the town farm and three others.

South Milford is a village now in three towns, Milford, Hopedale and Bellingham, all of which were set off from Mendon. It was one of the chief centers of that old town, and possessed a post office in 1814, nine years earlier than Milford. That office has always been in Mendon or Hopedale, as was the old toll house and the Green Store, but the cotton and woolen mill, 1812-1868, and the home of the five South Milford doctors, the two Corbets and the three Scammels, are within our town.

Those residents of Bellingham north of the Center who are not accommodated by the post offices at Caryville and North Bellingham are reached by the Medway Free Delivery Route No. 2, which has about one hundred and fifty mail boxes on a circuit of twenty-two and two tenths miles from Medway Village in Bellingham and Franklin.

Crimpville is the name of a small group of houses less than a mile north of the town house and across the Charles River from it, where the first Baptist Church was built in 1744. The name came from the process of shaping the legs of boots, which was carried on here before the Civil War. This was one of the smaller school districts for a time.

Bellingham Center is the meeting place of five roads, and the town house, schoolhouse, Baptist Church and store stand near together. In 1837 there were ten or twelve houses here. The Red Mill is near by, which was busy from 1830 to about 1860, and there were some small boot shops here then. For a long time the store has been kept by L. Francis Thayer and his father Ruel F.

Thayer before him. The old center of the town, where the first meeting house stood, built in 1722, was about a mile farther south, at the corner of Blackstone and South Main Streets. The Bellingham postmasters have been Wright Curtis 1823, Olney Foristall 1825, Hamlet Barber 1829, Elias Thayer 1831-1833. There was no office for four years. Then Joseph T. Massey 1837, Ellery Thayer 1840, Ruel F. Thayer 1864, E. E. Rockwood 1890, L. F. Thayer 1895, R. S. Thayer 1915.

The Four Corners are formed by the crossing of Maple and Mechanic Streets close to the Franklin line, about a mile from the town house. Four lines of electric cars meet here every hour, for Caryville and Medway, Franklin, Woonsocket, Bellingham Center and Milford.

Scott Hill is the general name of the high land on South Main Street where the Scott family has always lived, where more of the town can be seen at one view than anywhere else, most of it the pleasant Peter's River valley, four miles long and half as wide.

South Bellingham has usually not meant the south end of the town, but a few houses near where the Midland Railroad from Franklin to Blackstone crosses Centre Street near Railroad and Park Streets. This place is also called Rand's Crossing. It was once called Mullenville for a few years. A South Bellingham post office was kept by Paul Chilson 1850, and Reuben Chilson, 1851 to 1856; again by Orville C. Rhodes, 1887-1901.

Ninety-nine persons in the south part of the town signed a petition in 1891 for free delivery of their mail from the Woonsocket office in a district of six and one-half square miles with a circuit of nineteen miles. The carrier's journey is now six hours long, over twenty-four and seven tenths miles, and he visits two hundred and twenty-two mail boxes.

Rakeville was the name given to the neighborhood of the shop of Mr. Wilcox where rakes and other agricultural implements were made, about a mile east of Crooks' Corner on Wrentham Street.

Crooks' Corner, where five streets meet, is a half mile from Woonsocket and the Rhode Island line, at the southwest corner of the town. There seems to have been no tavern here in 1797, when the place for posting town warrants was undecided, but Wright Curtis kept one later till 1834, and then Jeremiah Crooks for thirty years. Close by is the south schoolhouse, which has had to be enlarged to keep up with the growth of the Woonsocket families whose homes are constantly coming farther and farther across the State line. Seven tracts of land have been divided into house lots and streets, and a few new street signs have been put up:

Social Park in 1900, on Centre Street and Peter's River.

Fairview Park in 1902, on Centre Street and Park Street.

Social Terrace in 1909, on Centre Street.

Social Villa in 1910, from Centre Street to Blackstone.

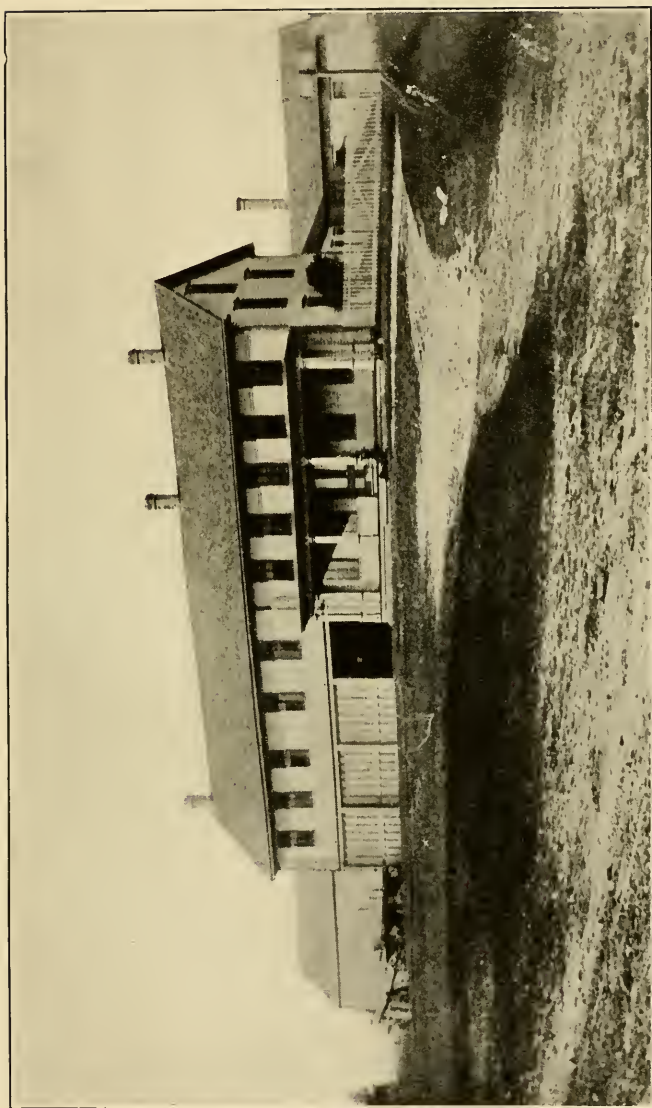
Franco Villa in 1913, on Paine Street and Peter's River.

Vallier Farm in 1913, on Paine Street and Wrentham Street.

Central Manor in 1916, on Centre Street and Peter's River.

The village store has been kept here lately by Hadley D. Perkins, but it has now been sold to Peter Duquette, who came from Connecticut.

The majority of our people from Crooks' Corner to Woonsocket are French, who belong to that city in many ways. There the first ones came as farmers, a



CROOKS' TAVERN, KEPT BY JEREMIAH CROOKS 1834—1860

few as early as 1814, and then went to work in the mills, which had just started. It is said that in 1841 there were only four French families in Woonsocket, but they came after that very fast, and the French population was fifteen hundred in 1847. Woonsocket was made a town in 1867; now it is a city of about forty-six thousand.

There are now about fifty-five French families in the south part of the town, and a few others elsewhere. Mr. Pascal Millet, who has lived close to the State line fifteen years, is eighty-six years old; he came to Woonsocket forty years ago. Mr. Edward Valliere has divided his land into house lots and streets near Crooks' Corner. Mr. William Rattier is perhaps the oldest French citizen; he has been here twenty-five or thirty years.

There are about fifteen Polish families here; the first comer was Lyon Kopinki, nine years. At North Bellingham and Caryville there are about as many more. At that end of the town are a few Armenian families.

We have two lines of electric cars; the longer one connects at Caryville with cars to Milford and Medway, and runs south to North Bellingham, Four Corners, Hoag Lake, Crooks' Corner and Woonsocket; the other comes from Franklin to Four Corners, then to Bellingham Center and South Milford to Milford. Both these lines meet at Four Corners every hour.

The town is crossed by three steam railroads. The first petition for a road from Boston to Woonsocket came before the Legislature in 1845. In 1861 trains ran from Brookline to Medway Village, and since 1863 they have run through to Woonsocket. There are now six passenger trains a day each way on this road, and three stations in town, Caryville, North Bellingham and Bellingham Junction, where it is crossed by the small

road from Franklin to Milford. This road has another station at South Milford. It has been running since 1882. Our third railroad is the one from Boston to Willimantic, Conn., by Franklin and Blackstone. It has a flag station at Centre Street near Railroad Street named South Bellingham. This was called Rand's Crossing in 1853, and there was then another station near the Blackstone line, called Mill River, now abandoned. From its position the oldest railroad in town has almost no local business here.

In telephones, as in other ways, our people are connected with different towns; two of our telephones belong to the Franklin exchange, five to Medway, sixteen to Milford, and thirty-seven to Woonsocket.

There are five cemeteries in the town. The one at North Bellingham was in use in 1718, for it is mentioned in a deed as "the burying place." At least four stones can now be read there, which are earlier than the formation of the town. These are some of the noticeable ones:

. . . Johnson departed in the . . . year of his age
April 5 1715.

HER LISE THE BODY OF BENONNI TOMSON

DESEED THE 14 DAY APRIL 1719

DR IOHN CORBETT 1726

PELATIAH SMITH 1727

1775 Come my friends behold & see
the place where once I us'd to be
But now I'm in Eternity
prepare for Death & follow me

1811 As I pass by with grief I see
My loving mate was took from me
Tho took by him who has a right
To call for me when he sees fit



THE NORTH BELLINGHAM CEMETERY, OLDER THAN THE TOWN ITSELF

1787 Depart my friends
Wipe off your tears
Here I must lie
Till Christ appears

Mrs Mary Relict of Mr. Eleazer Hayward Mar. 15
1814 in the hundred & second year of her age
I have waited for thy salvation O Lord

The South Bellingham cemetery is on Centre Street near where it is crossed by both the steam and the electric railroads. In 1717 at the third meeting of the proprietors of the common land between Wrentham and Dedham and the second meeting here, at the house of Nicholas Cook, "two or three acres" were voted for a burying place. His gravestone is here now. The yard was accepted by the town in 1756, and its bounds set up. Many of the stones have the phrase "which deceased"; *which* is sometimes used for *who* in the Bible, translated in 1611. Indians were buried in this same place.

Land for the Center Cemetery was given in 1778 by Jonathan Thompson and David Jones, and it was laid out by Elisha Burr. He wondered who would be buried here first, and it was his own young daughter Rebekah. "She died 1781 Aged 14 The first here buried." Mr. Alden's stone reads: "Sacred to the memory of Elder Noah Alden of Bellingham who Deceased from this Life May 5 1797 in the 72 year of his Age and 48 Year of his Public Ministry 31 of which he spent in this place."

The Scammel cemetery is on Grove Street at South Milford. It has only eighteen stones, the earliest dated 1839. Here is a monument to the Scammel family and especially to "Alexander Scammel Adjutant General of the American Armies and Colonel of the First Regiment of New Hampshire. While he commanded a

chosen corps of light infantry at the successful siege of York Town Va. in the gallant performance of his duty, a field officer of the day, he was unfortunately captured and afterwards insidiously wounded, of which wound he expired at Williamsburg Oct 1781 37 anno ætatis."

The Rakeville cemetery dates from about 1830. It is a neat yard with many beautiful stones.

Of the oldest persons in town, Mrs. Amanda Adams is ninety-four years old, and Mrs. Joanna Leahy ninety; above eighty-five are William E. Coombs, George C. McMaster, Pascal Millet, C. C. Willis and Mrs. Mary S. Pickering; above eighty are Joseph F. Hoar, Oliver Miette, Orlando S. Stetson, Alonzo N. Whitney and Mrs. Elizabeth Burke, Mrs. Olive Cook, and Mrs. Elizabeth Robelard.

The town's population during its second century has been:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1820 | 1034 | 1850 | 1281 | 1880 | 1223 | 1910 | 1696 |
| 1830 | 1102 | 1860 | 1313 | 1890 | 1334 | 1915 | 1953 |
| 1840 | 1055 | 1870 | 1282 | 1900 | 1682 | | |

The gain for ten years, 1905 to 1915, was about sixteen per cent, while the whole State gained twenty-three per cent.

In 1915 thirty-one per cent of the people of Massachusetts were foreign born, and five hundred and thirty persons here were born in foreign countries, twenty-seven per cent of the whole; in 1905 it was four hundred and thirty-one, or twenty-five per cent of the whole. In 1915 two hundred and forty persons here were born in Canada, ninety in Ireland, fifty-five in Poland, forty-nine in England, thirty-one in Sweden, thirty in Russia, nineteen in Italy, eighteen in Scotland, and seventeen in France. The names of seventy children born in town in the last two years seem to show thirty-three of American or

English origin, twenty-five French, seven Polish, four Italian, and one Swedish.

In 1915 six hundred and forty-six men and two hundred and nineteen women were reported at work:

| | | |
|--|---------|-----------|
| In manufacturing and mechanical industry | 327 men | 147 women |
| Farming | 180 men | |
| Trade | 68 men | 7 women |
| Domestic and personal service | 11 men | 31 women |
| Transportation | 33 men | 2 women |
| Professional service | 12 men | 18 women |
| Clerical work | 14 men | 16 women |

The three hundred and forty-seven voters in 1919 had thirty-one different occupations:

| | | | | | |
|------------|-----|--------------|----|---------------|---|
| Mill, | 104 | Chauffeur, | 2 | Teamster, | 7 |
| Farmer, | 87 | Chef | 2 | Mason, | 2 |
| Machinist, | 34 | Electrician, | 2 | Blacksmith, | 4 |
| Laborer, | 28 | Merchant, | 10 | Janitor, | 4 |
| Clerk, | 10 | Carpenter, | 9 | Manufacturer, | 4 |
| Fireman, | 3 | Railroad, | 9 | Straw Worker, | 4 |
| Baker, | 2 | Painter, | 7 | Butcher, | 3 |

One each:

| | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Accountant, | Drummer | Peddler |
| Barber, | Mail Carrier | Molder |
| Dyer, | Plumber | Telephone |
| | | Watchmaker |

The town is not directly represented as a town in either the government of the United States or of the State; in all their elections it chooses its Representatives as a part of some district defined for that purpose. In early years every town was required to send its own Representative to the General Court, but Bellingham was often excused from that duty. Its Representatives have been:

| | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|------|-----------------|
| 1776 | Stephen Metcalf | 1792 | Aaron Holbrook |
| 1781-1782 | Stephen Metcalf | 1794 | Joseph Holbrook |
| 1783 | Stephen Metcalf | 1797 | Joseph Holbrook |
| 1785 | 1787 and two other years. | 1800 | Laban Bates |
| | | 1804 | Laban Bates |
| 1788 | Aaron Holbrook | 1806 | Daniel Thurber |
| 1791 | Aaron Holbrook | 1807 | Daniel Thurber |

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1808-16 John Bates | 1853 Fenner Cook |
| 1819 Benjamin Hall | 1854 John Cook, 2d |
| 1823 Amos Hill | 1855 John Cook, 2d |
| 1824 Elias Cook | 1856 Martin Rockwood |
| 1827 John C. Scammell | 1858 Horace Rockwood |
| 1829 Joseph Rockwood | 1861 Daniel J. Pickering |
| 1831 John C. Scammell | 1863 George H. Townsend |
| 1832 Stephen Metcalf, Jr. | 1866 William Fairbanks |
| 1834 Stephen Metcalf, Jr. | 1872 Seneca Burr |
| 1838 Asa Pickering | 1875 Joseph T. Massey |
| 1841 Dwight Colburn | 1879 Hiram Whiting |
| 1842 Edward C. Craig | 1882 Nathan A. Cook |
| 1843 Jeremiah Crooks | 1888 Elijah B. Stowe |
| 1844 James M. Freeman | 1900 Warren E. Fairbanks |
| 1846 James M. Freeman | 1904 Henry N. Whitney |
| 1847 John Cook, 2d | 1906 Addison E. Bullard |
| 1851 Martin Rockwood | 1918 Clarence A. Crooks |
| 1852 Edwin Fairbanks | |

Under the careful and detailed laws of the State Legislature each town governs its own affairs, and makes an annual report. By our two hundredth report of 1919 every citizen can understand the process.

The first business at the annual town meeting in March is to choose a moderator for that meeting, and W. E. Fairbanks was chosen this year; he has filled that position thirty-three times in March, and at twenty-three special town meetings.

The first two officers to be chosen for the year are the clerk and the treasurer; in the past they have been:

TOWN CLERKS

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1720 Pelatiah Smith | 1754-60 Joseph Chilson |
| 1721, 2 John Marsh | 1761 Eliphalet Holbrook |
| 1723 Eleazer Partridge | 1762, 3 Joseph Chilson |
| 1724-7 John Marsh | 1764-70 Seth Hall |
| 1728, 9 James Smith | 1771-7 Aaron Holbrook |
| 1730-37 John Holbrook | 1778-80 Laban Bates |
| 1738 Eliphalet Holbrook | 1781 Aaron Holbrook |
| 1739 John Metcalf | 1782-6 Amos Ellis |
| 1740-43 Jonathan Thompson | 1787-9 Elisha Burr |
| 1744-9 Joseph Chilson | 1790 Amos Ellis |
| 1750-53 Eliphalet Holbrook | 1791 Cyrus Thompson |

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1792, 3 | Eliab Wight | 1845 | James M. Freeman |
| 1794, 5 | Joseph Holbrook | 1846, 7 | Amos H. Holbrook |
| 1796-1802 | Eliab Wight | 1848 | Francis D. Bates |
| 1803-18 | John Bates | 1849-54 | Amos H. Holbrook |
| 1819, 20 | Dr. Samuel L. Scammell | 1855, 6 | Eliab Holbrook |
| 1821-3 | Elias Cook | 1857-69 | Ruel F. Thayer |
| 1824 | Joseph Rockwood | 1870-79 | Joseph T. Massey |
| 1825, 6 | John C. Scammell | 1880-2 | Dr. Roland Hammond |
| 1827-37 | John Cook, 2d | 1883 | Arthur N. Whitney |
| 1838-41 | Edward C. Craig | 1883-1915 | Henry A. Whitney |
| 1842-4 | Francis C. Bates | 1915-19 | Percy C. Burr |

TOWN TREASURERS

| | | | |
|---------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| 1720-7 | John Holbrook | 1770 | Samuel Scott |
| 1728 | John Thompson, Sr. | 1771-5 | Eliphalet Holbrook |
| 1729-33 | John Thompson, Jr. | 1776-86 | Joseph Thompson |
| 1734 | Jonathan Thayer | 1787-1801 | Aaron Holbrook |
| 1735, 6 | Eliphalet Holbrook | 1802-8 | John Cook |
| 1737 | David Corbet | 1809-18 | Elias Thayer |
| 1738 | John Metcalf | 1819-29 | Asa Hall |
| 1739 | Dr. John Corbet | 1830-39 | Stephen Lewett |
| 1740 | Eliphalet Holbrook | 1840, 41 | Eliab Holbrook |
| 1741 | Dr. John Corbet | 1842-7 | William Paine |
| 1742 | Eliphalet Holbrook | 1848 | Ellery Thayer |
| 1743 | Joseph Holbrook | 1849 | Francis D. Bates |
| 1744 | Jonathan Thompson | 1850 | John Smith |
| 1745 | John Jones | 1851, 2 | Francis D. Bates |
| 1746, 7 | Jonathan Thompson | 1853, 4 | Valentine W. Holbrook |
| 1748, 9 | Joseph Chilson | 1855 | William Paine |
| 1750-52 | Joseph Thompson | 1856, 7 | Horatio Thayer |
| 1753 | Joseph Wight, Jr. | 1858 | Manning Thayer |
| 1754-6 | Eliphalet Holbrook | 1859-68 | Joseph T. Massey |
| 1757 | Cornelius Thayer | 1869 | Nathan A. Cook |
| 1758 | Joseph Chilson | 1870-79 | Joseph T. Massey |
| 1759-63 | Benjamin Partridge | 1880-1901 | Ruel F. Thayer |
| 1764 | Dr. John Corbet | 1902-9 | L. Francis Thayer |
| 1765-9 | Caleb Phillips | 1909-19 | Walter H. Thayer |

PRESENT TOWN OFFICERS

Clerk, Percy C. Burr.

Treasurer, Walter H. Thayer.

Selectmen, Harold M. Bullard, Cornelius J. Foley, Hadley D. Perkins.

Assessors, Carroll E. White, John F. McCarthy, Timothy E. Foley.

Overseers of the Poor, Otto L. Bullard, Emery B. Whiting, Percy C. Burr.

School Committee, Joseph A. Palmer, Henry A. McCarthy, John R. Kennelly.

Auditor, Michael J. Smith.

Tax Collector, Walter H. Thayer.

Tree Warden, Lewis E. Whitney.

Constables, Moise Champagne, Eli E. Cook, John H. Foley.
 Cemetery Committee, Lewis E. Whitney, Eldred J. Wentzel.
 Library Trustees, Bertha Franklin, Warren E. Whiting, A. Evelyn Sackett,
 Waldo I. Cook, Susan C. Fairbanks, Lawrence Mason.

The town clerk reported seventy births in 1918, fifteen marriages and thirty-nine deaths. One hundred and thirty-eight dogs were licensed and ninety-two hunters' licenses issued.

The expenses were:

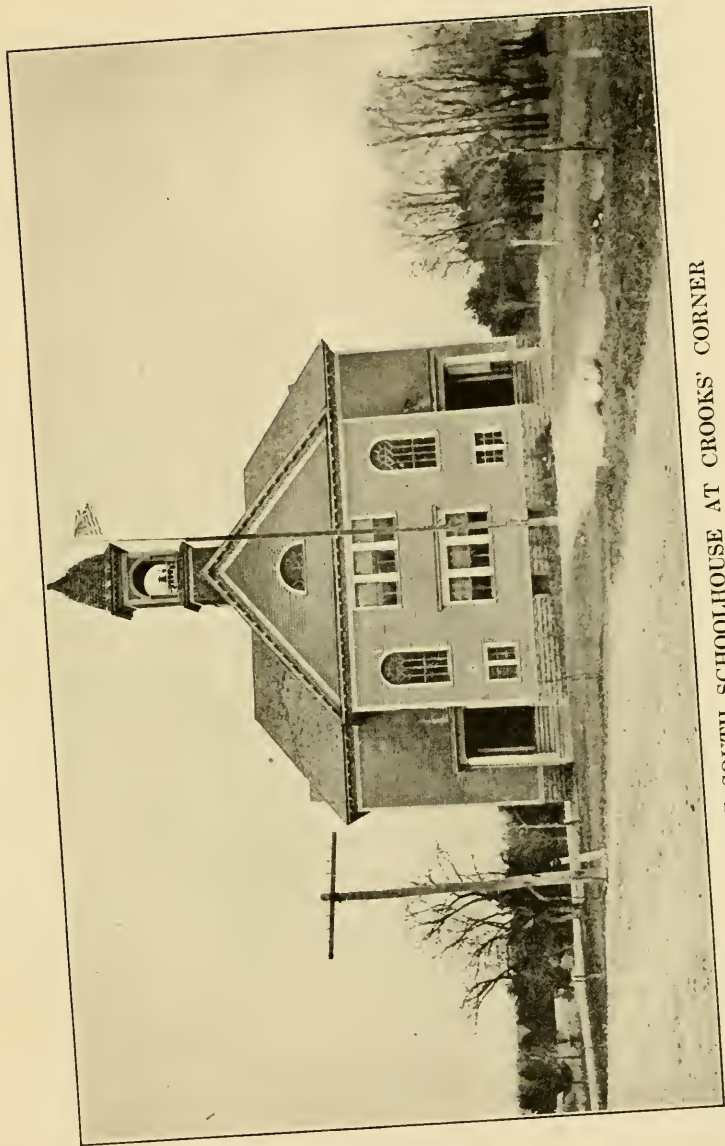
| | | | |
|---------------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| Schools, Income and | \$8500 | Poor, Income and | \$1600 |
| Streets | 10645 | Town Officers | 1589 |
| Mothers' Aid | 1800 | Interest | 604 |
| Street Lights | 1643 | Miscellaneous | 578 |
| Insurance | 469 | Tree Warden | 200 |
| Forest Fires | 316 | Board of Health | 180 |
| Printing | 311 | Cemeteries | 138 |
| Tree Moths | 244 | Memorial Day | 60 |

There were five citizens at the town farm.

The Assessors reported three hundred and one persons who pay only a poll tax, and three hundred and ninety-two residents with three hundred and eighteen non-residents who pay a property tax, on \$297,365 personal and \$959,705 real estate, \$19 for each \$1000. There are eleven thousand two hundred and ten acres of land, four hundred and forty-six houses, two hundred and six horses, three hundred and eighty-five cows, one hundred and eleven other cattle, fifty sheep, forty-three swine and four thousand three hundred and fifteen fowls.

In the last published tax book, for 1916, there were twenty-four persons in town who paid \$100 or more each and five non-residents:

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| A. A. Aldrich, | \$112 | Proctor P. Cook, | \$149 | James Riley, | \$132 |
| O. L. Bullard, | 183 | Ferdinand DeJony, | 231 | Edgar M. Scott, | 148 |
| A. E. Bullard, | 337 | Hubert Guerin, | 120 | George A. Staples, | 109 |
| Bellingham Woolen Co., | 2200 | Asahel W. Mann, | 115 | Joseph A. Trottier, | 376 |
| Clarence A. Crooks, | 116 | Patrick O'Neil, | 104 | Taft Woolen Co., | 1886 |
| Judson E. Camp, | 367 | Henry W. Pickering, | 176 | L. Francis Thaver, | 679 |
| Alfred Carrier, | 251 | Wilfred Pelletier, | 101 | Marion A. White, | 118 |
| William A. Coombs, | 127 | Eldridge A. Rhodes, | 133 | Julia A. White, | 105 |



THE SOUTH SCHOOLHOUSE AT CROOKS' CORNER

Non-Residents: Joseph B. Cook, Cumberland, \$100; Joseph G. Ray, Franklin, \$245; M. A. & W. Street Railway, Hoag Lake, etc., \$422; Western Union Telegraph Company, N. Y., \$128; Winnesuket Golf Club, Woonsocket, \$105. These residents paid \$3375, and these non-residents \$1000, of the whole amount, \$22,600.

The town reduced its debt by \$1000 last year, leaving only \$3000 of schoolhouse notes due, and its temporary debt is offset by its cash balance, kept for this year's needs.

The tax rate in 1919 is \$21 on a thousand.

The cemetery trust fund amounts to \$2972, for the care of forty-six lots.

The town library was started in 1884 and kept for ten years in the house of Martin Rockwood. In 1895 it was moved to the Massey School. The annual appropriation was at first \$50; it is now \$400. Miss Bertha Franklin was the librarian from 1907 to 1919; her successor is Mrs. A. Evelyn Sackett. The home circulation in 1918 was: Center, two thousand nine hundred and twenty-one; Caryville, nine hundred and eighty-four; Crooks' Corner, five hundred and twenty-six; South Bellingham, two hundred; Schools, two hundred and seventy; total, four thousand nine hundred. The whole number of volumes is about three thousand.

The schools are managed by a superintendent, Mr. F. G. Atwell, hired by the three towns, Mendon, Hopedale and Bellingham, whose salary was \$2250, of which Bellingham paid \$810. We had twelve teachers, who received \$5491. Of three hundred and fifty-seven persons in town between five and sixteen years old, three hundred and sixteen were in our schools, which were in session one hundred and sixty-nine days. In 1915 forty-nine persons over ten years old could not read. The cost of general control was \$679, books \$123, supplies \$334, janitors \$900, fuel \$616, transportation of pupils within

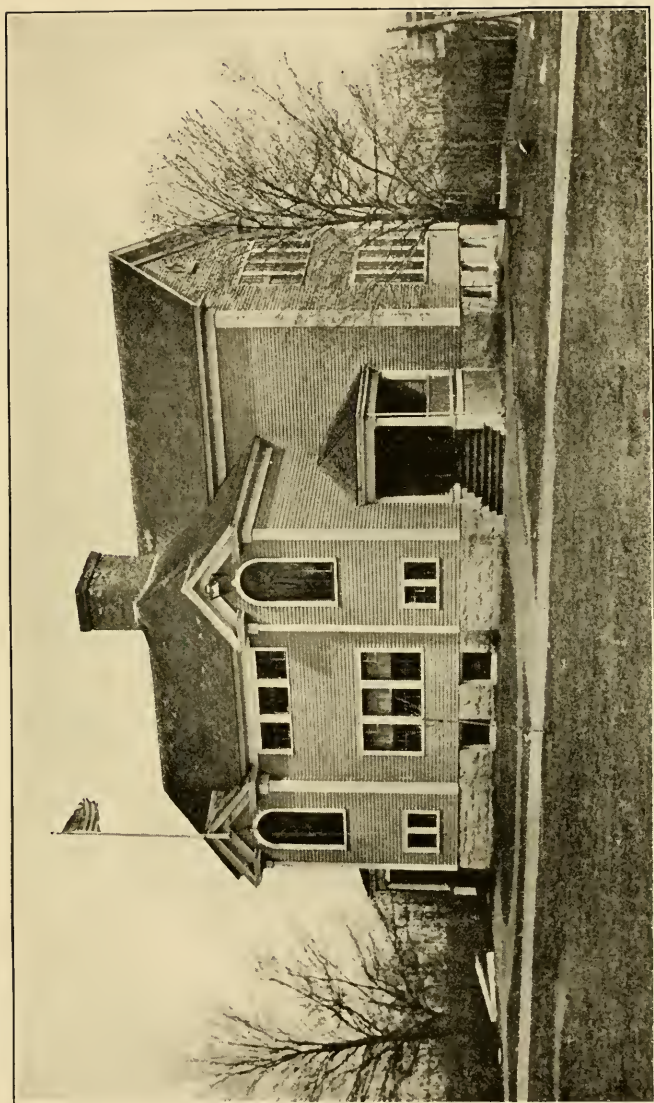
the town \$217, of twenty-three pupils to other towns \$535, and tuition of those pupils \$928; but the State repaid \$800 of it. The whole cost of the schools was about \$11,000.

A COMPARATIVE TABLE

| <i>Source of supply</i> | <i>Whole amount</i> | <i>Per pupil</i> | <i>Rank in the State</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Town valuation | \$1,152,860 | \$35.93 | No. 322 |
| State aid | 1,963 | 6.80 | 141 |
| Town school tax | 8,768 | 7.61 per \$1000 | 104 |
| Town school tax | 8,768 | 30.00 per pupil | 273 |
| All sources | 10,853 | 37.04 | 293 |

This table shows that Bellingham is comparatively a poor town; the valuation of the State amounts to \$8294 for every pupil in it; in Bellingham it is only \$3593, making its rank in ability to support its schools among the three hundred and fifty-four cities and towns No. 322. But it receives in aid from the State \$6.80 for each pupil, ranking No. 141, and it taxes itself \$7.61 per \$1000 for schools, with the high rank of No. 104. The pupils receive of its own money \$30 each, in which respect it ranks No. 273, and from all sources \$37.04, giving the town the rank of No. 293.

The last subject of this chapter and of this book is the schools. Upon them, with the churches and the homes, depends chiefly what kind of people will live here in the future; and these three institutions themselves depend on what the people of Bellingham do now.



SCHOOLHOUSE AT THE CENTER AND AT NORTH BELLINGHAM

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Only the more important subjects are mentioned here. All the lists of names of persons are in alphabetical order.

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